

A CASE STUDY EXPLORING APPLICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BUSINESSES

by

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ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY EXPLORING APPLICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BUSINESSES

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Transformational leaders in professional services businesses can help develop and inspire people and organizations to overcome disruption and succeed. At the same time, numerous pressures on leaders, such as quarterly financial reporting and the shift from long-term engagements to project-based work, may cause leaders to focus on the transactional and short term. Transformational leadership in this study is defined as leadership that goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals and places an emphasis on the needs and values of followers, thereby fostering transformation in people and organizations (Northouse, 2018). This study addresses how CEOs of professional services businesses are transformational with their clients and teams in a complex and challenging business environment that is steeped in transactional activities.

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as

transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments.

This case study encompassed 10 CEOs of professional services businesses and 18 team members. Client satisfaction survey data were also analyzed to incorporate client perspectives. A major finding of this study was that a strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence, which consists of building trust and acting with integrity, and individualized consideration, which consists of listening carefully to individual needs, acting as coach or advisor, and treating others in unique and caring ways (Bass & Avolio, 1997). All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences. A majority (64%) of participants indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work, while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work.

A key recommendation emanating from this study is that CEOs and those aspiring to become CEOs of professional services businesses engage in idealized influence and individualized consideration activities if they seek to be transformational.

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DEDICATION

To future leaders. May you transform our world for the better.

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I wish to thank my advisors, committee, professors, participants, classmates, reviewers, and family. I also wish to thank the leaders who have inspired me.

R.M.B.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the elements of the study on transformational leadership in 10 Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of professional services businesses.

Transformational leadership in this study is defined as leadership that goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals and places an emphasis on the needs and values of followers, thereby fostering transformation in people and organizations (Northouse, 2018). The chapter begins with a discussion of the context and issues germane to the problem, chiefly: disruption, transformational leadership, and the professional services sector of the economy. It then covers the problem statement, research purpose, research questions, research design overview, anticipated outcomes, assumptions, rationale, significance, researcher, and definitions of key terminology.

Context

Disruption

We can never step into the same river twice according to pre-Socratic ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, active around 500 BCE, who believed everything is in a process of constant change (“Heraclitus,” 2015). Many aspects of our lives may seem continuous and enduring over many generations but turn out to be impermanent. General Electric, an original member of the Dow Jones Industrial Average, going back to 1896,

and formerly the world's most valuable company, dropped out of the index in June 2018 (Ponczek & Clough, 2018; Rivas, 2018). General Electric is not alone in struggling with societal changes and disruptive forces that many organizations face.

EY (formerly Ernst & Young), the multinational professional services firm, describes the current time period we are living in as the “transformative age” citing cloud-based computing, robotics, cognitive technologies, gig economy, smart cities, cybersecurity, diversity, and big data (“Are you ready to navigate the Transformative Age?” n.d.). With these technological and societal shifts, organizations need to be open to new ways of thinking and working and cannot afford to rest on their laurels.

Klaus Schwab (2016), founder of the World Economic Forum, writes about the fourth industrial revolution as one that builds on the digital (third) revolution that has been occurring since the mid-1900s and is distinct because of the velocity, scope, and systems impact of the transformations. According to Schwab, this revolution entails a fusion of technologies that merges the physical, digital, and biological. He cites the access to mobile devices by billions of people, artificial intelligence, robotics, internet of things (everyday objects embedded with technology that collects and exchanges data), autonomous vehicles, 3-D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, energy storage, and quantum computing. Schwab notes that the new technologies can create new ways for businesses to serve customer needs and disrupt the activities that firms perform. Consumer behavior is also shifting as a result of these technological changes; for example, mobile platforms have created new ways to consume goods and services (Schwab, 2016).

Since the first industrial revolution, machines have been developed to support or replace the work of people. In reporting on labor-saving automation and job displacement, the World Bank (2016) reports that while more than 200,000 industrial robots are coming into use each year, automation is increasingly prevalent in services, for example in answering customer service requests, in suggesting what customers should buy, translations, paralegal services, and travel services. In the same report, the World Bank estimates that 50-60% of jobs in the US and Europe are susceptible to automation in the coming decades, while in other countries the level of jobs displaced could be as high as two-thirds. The report states, “even if all those jobs do not fully disappear – unlikely in a short period – they will be significantly transformed” (2016, p. 128). Automation is likely to disrupt many industries in the near future to some extent.

In *The End of Power* (2014) Moisés Naím writes that for many decades, several large companies in each industry dominated and that it was unthinkable to dislodge them. Today, he writes, competition is fiercer, dominance has declined, and new competitors capture significant market share. The new competitors are not typically other large companies – they are “a different set of players that rely on new rules, sources of power, and competitive strategies” (p. 160). Further, established companies must contend, to a greater extent than before, with scrutiny and intervention from “governments, shareholder activists, environmental groups, institutional investors, labor unions, and the media – among others” (p. 160). Naím also cites several other reasons why corporate dominance is threatened: diminished CEO tenure, increased global competition, diminished barriers to enter industries, the increased importance of intangible assets over physical assets, the difficulty of sustaining brand advantage, increased opportunity for entrepreneurs to

access capital (e.g., from venture capital, angel, or private equity investors), outsourced innovation, and the role of hedge funds. According to Naím, “corporate power isn’t what it used be” (p. 192).

The United States and China have been engaged in a trade battle that has created volatility in markets around the world (Davis, 2018). The potential impact of the trade battle is significant because the United States and China are the two largest global economies (Bajpai, 2018). Elements of the trade battle encompass demands on tariffs, restrictions on foreign companies operating in China, foreign investment in China, cyber espionage, treasury sanctions, and industrial policies (Davis, 2018). The volatility brought about by the trade tensions is an additional source of challenge and disruption for many organizations. Producers and consumers need to operate their businesses in light of these tariffs, which have uncertain duration. Based on increased costs, many organizations need to, or need to be prepared to, source and produce their materials, goods, or services in different ways.

Brexit, the UK’s vote to exit the European Union, and the factors surrounding it, also has a destabilizing effect around the world, with the bargaining between European Union governments expected to take years and the political and legal uncertainties for companies expected to inflict economic losses (Bremmer, 2016). Bremmer believes that people around the world have a growing demand for change and that the challenge for governments is to meet those demands without damaging their politics and economies.

Transformational Leadership

The term *leadership* has multiple definitions and most involve a process of influence to guide or facilitate activities in a group or organization (Yukl, 2013).

Transformational leadership in this study is defined as leadership that goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals and places an emphasis on the needs and values of followers, thereby fostering transformation in people and organizations (Northouse, 2018). I believe the state of the world today can be attributed to the impact of transformational leaders across human history and that transformational leaders will be vital to the future of our species. In a time of seemingly accelerating change and complexity, it is my assumption that transformational leaders can help develop and inspire people and organizations to succeed.

Transformational leaders can operate in a range of contexts, for example: government, for-profit organizations, non-profit organizations, and community-based organizations. Research on transformational leadership encompasses many contexts. It has been conducted around the world, lending validity to its existence and applicability.

Transformational leaders are believed to motivate followers to perform beyond expectations by building awareness of the importance of an organization's mission and vision in a way that followers share beliefs and values, transcend self-interest, and activate higher-order needs of self-esteem and self-actualization (Rosenbach, 2018). Evidence suggests that transformational leadership is linked to positive outcomes, such as organizational effectiveness (Northouse, 2018). Additionally, transformational leadership behaviors, such as encouraging creativity, recognizing accomplishments, building trust, and inspiring a collective vision, are found to be preferred over transactional leadership

behaviors by employees in a sample of certified professional accountants working at companies with over 1,000 employees (Notgrass, 2014). I will describe transformational leadership further in Chapter II.

Transactional leadership, defined as a type of leadership that focuses on exchanges that are valued between leaders and their followers (Burns, 1978), is the antithesis of transformational leadership. There are many types of transactions, ranging from the obvious to the less obvious. Bass describes that transactional leaders “mostly consider how to marginally improve and maintain the quantity and quality of performance, how to substitute one goal for another, how to reduce resistance to particular actions, and how to implement decisions” (1985, p. 27). Bass (1996) describes three types of transactional leadership behaviors: contingent reward, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. Transactional leadership can lead to short-termism. Managerial short-termism is considered prevalent and can harm shareholder wealth and the aggregate economy (Lel & Tepe, 2018). In a study of 129 participants working in a range of occupations, through questionnaire and hair cortisol (stress hormone) level analysis, transactional leadership has been associated with increased cortisol levels in employees (Rowold, Diebig, & Heinitz, 2017). Bass believes that effective leaders use both transactional and transformational leadership and, that they are not mutually exclusive (1985).

Transformational leadership is said to lack conceptual clarity, since it covers multiple activities and characteristics, like creating a vision, motivating, being a change agent, building trust, nurturing, and acting as a social architect (Northouse, 2018). As I describe further in Chapter II, studies of transformational leadership consider a wide

variety of organizational contexts and industries, for example information technology, logistics, manufacturing, government, food service, casino, hospital, and university.

However, there is a lack of research that explicitly focuses on professional services firms (e.g., consulting, financial, or marketing services firms). As economies around the world move toward fewer manufacturing and more services industries, it is my belief that it is important to develop understanding about transformational leadership in professional service contexts.

Professional Services

Professional service firms are known to play an important role in knowledge-based economies (Fu, Flood, Bosak, Rousseau, Morris, & O'Regan, 2017). Professional service firms have tended to be defined indirectly or with a list of examples of firms, so to better define and clarify what professional services firms are, von Nordenflycht (2010) developed a taxonomy of four types:

1. Technology developers (e.g., biotechnology firms, research & development labs), with characteristics of high knowledge intensity and high capital intensity.
2. Neo professional service firms (e.g., consulting and advertising firms), with characteristics of high knowledge intensity and low capital intensity.
3. Professional campuses (e.g., hospitals), characterized by high knowledge intensity, a professionalized workforce, and high capital intensity.
4. Classic professional service firms (e.g., law, accounting, and architecture firms), characterized by high knowledge intensity and a professionalized workforce.

In *Managing the Professional Services Firm*, two aspects of professional services firms are described that differentiate them from firms in other sectors: (1) a high degree of customization is entailed in the work, so little information can be made routine and there is little repetition of tasks or products, and (2) the work of these firms requires a high degree of face-to-face interaction with clients, with work quality and service having to be managed carefully (Maister, 1997). Clients of professional service firms have varying requirements, contexts, and goals that require customized solutions.

Professional services firms that develop highly customized offerings for clients require the “braiding together [of] many tasks that (1) are knowledge intensive, (2) require the coordinated efforts of individuals with specialized knowledge and skills, (3) are systemic (elements of the offerings depend on each other for development and performance), and (4) have emergent properties during development (unpredictable and unexpected events and interactions often occur)” (Madhavarama & Hunt, 2017, p. 38). Offerings of professional service firms that are high quality and customized can greatly impact the businesses of the firm’s clients (Madhavarama & Hunt, 2017).

Heirati, O’Cass, Schoefer, and Siahtiri describe the competitive and turbulent environment of professional service firms, noting they “now more than ever are operating in an increasingly confounding and uncertain environment, where the tempo is faster and the competition is stronger” (2016, p. 50). Professional service firms face multiple challenges operating in an environment that is fast-paced, competitive, global, and that requires firms to address increasing size, complexity, conflict, sustainability, and legacy (Baeza, 2018). Baeza proposes that these challenges require professional service firms to address the development of leaders and emerging leaders.

Research Problem

In a time of seemingly accelerating change and complexity, it is assumed in this study that transformational leaders in professional services firms can help develop and inspire people and organizations to succeed. Transformational leaders can help people and organizations overcome disruption from various changes occurring across political, economic, social, technical, legal, and environmental arenas. At the same time, numerous pressures on leaders, such as quarterly financial reporting and the shift from long-term engagements to project-based work, may cause leaders to focus on the transactional and short term. While transactional leadership helps with important business functions, that type of leadership alone is unlikely to bring long term success to organizations. This study addresses how CEOs of professional services businesses are transformational with their clients and teams in a business environment that is steeped in transactional activities. It looks at the tensions of leading transformationally in increasingly complex and challenging organizational environments. Because transformational leadership can be instrumental for the long-term viability of organizations, it is important to understand the ways leaders are transformational in complex work environments, the factors that help and hinder transformational leadership, and how leaders become transformational. To date there is little research on transformational leadership specifically in professional services firms and no research specifically on the development of transformational leadership in professional services firms.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments.

Research Questions

1. What actions do CEOs who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?
2. How do these CEOs describe how they learned to be transformational?
3. What factors do these CEOs perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

Research Design Overview

This research employed a qualitative, exploratory case study methodology. Given the lack of research to date on transformational leadership in professional services firms and the development of transformational leadership in these environments, a qualitative, exploratory case study approach can provide better understanding of the phenomena entailed. I studied 10 CEOs across 10 different businesses within a large, global, professional services conglomerate organization that employs over 100,000 people. The study employed a purposive sampling method. I asked several C-level executives at the corporate headquarters of the global conglomerate to identify CEOs across the businesses

that they view as transformational. From the names they provided, I studied the first 10 CEOs that agreed to participate in the study. I also interviewed 18 direct reports (team members) of these CEOs, up to two per CEO. I reviewed archival data from the organization – written comments from client satisfaction surveys. With the two audiences interviewed and archival data analysis, I achieved methodological triangulation. Data from the interviews and satisfaction surveys were coded and synthesized using frequency charts. I conducted pattern-matching, explanation-building, and cross-case synthesis. Full details on the methodology can be found in Chapter III.

Anticipated Outcomes

The findings of this research study may yield insight to the approaches of CEOs that are considered by company executives to be transformational. These approaches may be leveraged by other leaders and future leaders in professional services industries. Insight into the factors that are seen as helping or hindering transformational leadership can help senior executives set the conditions for transformational leadership to flourish in their organizations. Insight into the ways that leaders learn to be transformational can be leveraged into developmental plans and leadership development initiatives for current and future leaders in professional services industries.

Assumptions

As I began my research, I held several beliefs about transformational leaders in the professional services sector:

1. There are transformational CEOs in the professional services sector.
2. Transformational leadership in the professional services environment today is not the same as it was 10 or more years ago, when many contextual factors were different.
3. Transformational leadership extends beyond one's team and organization and encompasses clients and potentially the clients' organization(s).
4. There are common elements to transformational leadership even though the transformational leaders may understand it differently.

Rationale and Significance

The rationale for this study stems from a recognition that if organizations around the world – whether for-profit, non-profit, government, or other – are not able to transform to overcome disruption, those organizations and the communities and societies that depend on them may be at risk. As transformational leadership has the potential to help with many challenges that organizations face, particularly in times of increasing complexity and disruption, it should be further studied. I have had a lifelong interest in leadership, from the time I was involved in student groups and sports teams, through my study of change management and transformational learning, and in my career focused in the field of leadership development. I have observed many ways that society and consumers are changing, many ways that organizations are being disrupted, and the need for leaders and organizations to be transformational to succeed.

There are several ways that this study is significant. This study may provide a better understanding of how professional services organization CEOs that are seen as

transformational lead, the factors that help and hinder their leadership, and how they have learned to lead. The findings may be used by CEOs and those aspiring to become CEOs to enhance their transformational leadership capabilities. Executives may apply the findings to create environments in their organizations for transformational leadership to flourish. Learning and development practitioners may be able to design developmental programs or career plans to enhance transformational leadership based on the findings of this study. There is value in leveraging transformative and experiential learning theory to help understand the development of transformational leadership in professional services businesses because this is not addressed in the literature. This study will be among the first on transformational leadership that encompasses clients; all other studies focus on the direct reports and organization of the leaders. Insights from this study may point to ways to further enhance transformational leadership theory.

The Researcher

My educational background, professional experience, cultural diversity, and personal interests influenced how I framed this research, including the assumptions I made, how I understood the topic, and how I designed the study.

I am a doctoral candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. I obtained a Master of Arts in Social-Organizational Psychology from the same institution 12 years prior to starting my doctoral studies. A large component of my master's degree curriculum encompassed change management. I also hold a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from Duke University. At Duke I was particularly interested in learning about leadership, organizational effectiveness,

authenticity, and values. This educational background provided a broad base of theories and approaches to frame the study and understand the topic and the data collected.

For the past 14 years I have worked full time in the learning and development team of a global marketing services organization. I design, market, deliver, consult on, and evaluate learning and development programs and initiatives. I have worked on many different learning initiatives for various audiences, though typically for senior leaders and high potential mid-career talent. I have facilitated at programs in almost 40 countries for my organization. Prior to working at my current organization, I worked at three financial services organizations. My professional experience also encompasses service on advisory boards. I currently serve on several advisory boards – for learning and development businesses and for a hotel and conference center chain. My professional experience has put me in direct contact with over a thousand business leaders. By helping them to develop themselves and their organizations, I have insight into how leaders think, work, and develop. Furthermore, I have a broad understanding of how professional services organizations function across different countries, how they work with their clients, and patterns and dynamics within and across these types of organizations.

My cultural diversity helps to provide a global perspective for this research. I was born in Hong Kong, a global city, and lived there nearly half my life. The student body at my middle and high schools included over 60 nationalities. I broadened my cultural perspectives by having also lived in the UK, Singapore, and the United States. During the time I worked on this study, I resided in New York City. My family is primarily of Indian origin, though neither of my parents were born in India. I consider myself a multicultural person, with Indian, British, American, and Chinese identities. This multicultural identity

enables me to view leadership approaches, interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics through multiple lenses.

My curiosity in the topic of transformational leadership stems from my own experiences as a leader in many contexts. From a young age I have tended to take on leadership roles, such as on a sports team, debate team, dormitory, or various other student organizations. My experience as a leader, in particular the challenges of making strategic decisions and motivating a team, fueled my curiosity to study leadership and work in the field of leadership development. I see myself on the path of developing into a transformational leader, helping to transform the teams and organizations I work with. This developmental aspiration fuels my sustained interest in the topic. I am motivated for self-development and to help the development of others. This motivation increased my level of interest and inquisitiveness at all phases of the study, particularly during the data collection, data analysis, and in determining recommendations.

Definitions of Key Terminology

Artificial intelligence: “The use of computer programs that have some of the qualities of the human mind, such as the ability to understand language, recognize pictures, and learn from experience” (Artificial intelligence, n.d.).

Big data: “Very large sets of data that are produced by people using the internet, and that can only be stored, understood, and used with the help of special tools and methods” (Big data, n.d.).

Chief Executive Officer: “The top manager in a company who has the greatest responsibility and makes the most important decisions” (Chief executive officer, n.d.).

Client: “Someone who receives professional services from an organization” (Client, n.d.).

Cybersecurity: “Ways of protecting computer systems against threats such as viruses” (Cybersecurity, n.d.).

Direct report: “An employee whose position at work is directly below that of another person, and who is managed by that person” (Direct report, n.d.).

Gig economy: “A way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separate pieces of work, each paid separately, rather than working for an employer” (Gig-economy, n.d.).

Professional services firm: A business organization with knowledge-intensive (versus capital intensive) work, a knowledge-based workforce, that tends to service client organizations rather than individual end customers, and that develops highly customized project-based offerings for clients (Madhavaram & Hunt, 2017; von Nordenflycht, 2010; Maister, 1997).

Team: “A group of people who work together on a particular activity, project, etc.” (Team, n.d.).

Transactional leadership: This is a type of leadership that focuses on exchanges that are valued between leaders and their followers (Burns, 1978). Bass (1996) describes three types of transactional leadership behaviors: contingent reward (exchanges for specific

rewards), active management by exception (watching for errors and taking corrective action), and passive management by exception (using punishment or other corrective action in response to poor performance).

Transformational leadership: While there are multiple conceptualizations and definitions of transformational leadership (see Burns, 1978; Kouzes & Posner 1996, 2017; Bass & Avolio 1997; Bennis & Nanus 1985, 2007), Northouse (2018) describes that transformational leadership goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals and places an emphasis on the needs and values of followers, thereby fostering transformation in people and organizations.

Transformational work: In this study I define transformational work as the activities of transformational leaders and their teams aimed at achieving desired goals or outcomes that can entail significant changes in people and organizations.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments. The two topic areas that this literature review discusses are transformational leadership and adult learning. The transformational leadership section covers definitions, links with other constructs, and impacts of transformational leadership. The adult learning section covers transformative learning, experiential learning, and leadership development. I then present a critique of the research and conclusions. The conceptual framework for the study is described and displayed in the final section of this chapter.

Rationale for Topics

This chapter provides a review of a selection of research deemed relevant to this study of the application and development of transformational leadership in professional services businesses. Through reviewing topics within transformational leadership and

adult learning, this chapter shows what has already been defined, theorized, and studied in areas related to my research topic.

The transformational leadership section begins with a review of the various ways it has been described and defined. After discussing how the phenomena have been defined and linkages between the definitions, I then review linkages to other constructs such as emotional intelligence, authentic leadership, and resilient leadership. By understanding similarities and distinctions in how transformational leadership is defined and related to other constructs, we can better review subsequent research and better conduct research studies. As this research study looked at how transformational leadership is applied, I also discuss research studies that show the application and impacts of transformational leadership.

While there is substantial research on various contexts and impacts of transformational leadership, there is a lack of research in how it is developed. Within adult learning literature, there is a lack of research on transformational leadership development. Two areas of adult learning theory that are relevant to transformational leadership and its development in professional services industries are experiential learning and transformative learning. Learning from experience is highly relevant in professional service firms, which often rely more on on-the-job learning for employee learning and development rather than formal learning methods. Exploring transformative learning helps us to gain greater perspective on the transformational components of transformational leadership.

By discussing the literature on both transformational leadership and adult learning, this section aims to demonstrate a novel intersection of the two areas for my

research. The intersection is novel because, as I will show in this chapter, there appear to be gaps in our understanding of how transformational leadership is learned and developed. My research has the potential to advance new thinking in transformational leadership application and development in professional services industries.

Literature Review Process

The research reviewed in this chapter was found primarily online through Columbia University Library, Teachers College Gottesman Library, and Google Scholar. I also searched for literature through Google and Bing search engines. In addition, I conducted searches for printed material in person at the Teachers College Gottesman Library. The literature review presented in this chapter was conducted throughout my dissertation process.

The material I reviewed included books, e-books, academic journals, practitioner publications, newspaper articles, magazine articles, company websites, company publications, news websites, dissertations, and reports. I focused my search and placed more weight on scholarly work published in peer-review journals.

The search terms I used include: leadership, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, leadership development, leadership and learning, leadership and adult learning, transformational leadership and development, transformative learning, experiential learning, and learning from experience.

Examples of academic journals reviewed and included in this chapter are: *Academy of Management Review*, *Journal of Administrative and Business Studies*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of*

Leadership Studies, Journal of Management Development, Journal of Research on Leadership Education, Leadership & Organization Development Journal, and The Leadership Quarterly.

Regarding definitional issues, I reviewed seminal and foundational works. For all other aspects, I strived to review recent research relevant to the topics at hand.

Transformational leaders can operate in a range of contexts, for example: government, for-profit organizations, non-profit organizations, and community-based organizations. Research on transformational leadership encompasses many contexts. In this literature review I have not limited my focus to one type of organization or context, with a view of building a fuller understanding of transformational leadership.

Research on transformational leadership has been conducted around the world, lending validity to its existence and applicability. The research studies I discuss in this chapter involve fieldwork and populations in about 10 countries.

As transformational leadership research has been conducted across many contexts and countries in mostly empirical formats, I assume that the studies contribute to the body of knowledge of the field and that the studies can build off each other in order to develop implications for practice and further research. If I do not make these assumptions, then I need to treat each study as isolated or solipsistic, and it would be problematic to use these studies as platforms for thinking about implications for practice and future research.

Topic 1: Transformational Leadership

This section begins with a review of how the concept of transformational leadership was identified and defined over time. This first subsection is presented in chronological order, with a view to show the roots and evolution of transformational leadership theory from the beginning to present day. I then review literature that links transformational leadership with other constructs in order to clarify the associations and boundaries of the concepts. In particular, I discuss recent research that looks at personality, emotional intelligence, authentic leadership, resilient leadership, and servant leadership. The final subsection looks at recent research conducted on the impacts of transformational leadership. I discuss research studies linking transformational leadership and corporate entrepreneurship, learning organizations, follower creativity, organizational identity strength, job satisfaction, organization-focused ideas, work motivation, stress levels, mastery goals, and diversity management.

Transformational Leadership Defined

Across most of the transformational leadership literature, the earliest theorist discussed is James MacGregor Burns (1978). He was an American historian and political scientist. Burns discussed two types of political leadership: transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership focuses on exchanges that are valued between leaders and their followers and according to Burns, “[transactional] leaders approach followers with an eye toward exchanging” (p. 4). There are many kinds of transactions, ranging from the obvious to the less obvious. On the other hand, “the Transforming leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages

the full person of the follower” (p. 4). Burns (1978) believes that transformational leadership raises the level of motivation and morality of both leaders and followers, that it raises “the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both” (p. 20).

Bass (1985) developed the concepts of transformational leadership and transactional leadership further and applied them to organizational contexts. Bass describes that transactional leaders “mostly consider how to marginally improve and maintain the quantity and quality of performance, how to substitute one goal for another, how to reduce resistance to particular actions, and how to implement decisions” (1985, p. 27). Bass further explains that transformational leadership motivates followers by increasing their awareness of the importance of specified goals, motivating them to transcend self-interest for the sake of the team or organization, and activating higher needs. Bass believes that effective leaders use both transactional and transformational leadership and, that they are not mutually exclusive.

According to Bass (1985) there are three types of transformational leadership behavior: 1) idealized influence, which arouses follower emotions and identification with the leader, 2) intellectual stimulation, which increases follower awareness of problems and viewing them from new perspectives, and 3) individualized consideration, which consists of support, coaching, and mentoring. Bass and Avolio (1997) revise the theory to include a fourth transformational behavior, inspirational motivation, which entails communicating expectations and using symbols and emotional appeals to focus efforts.

To measure transformational leadership, Bass (1985) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). This is the most commonly used measurement for

transformational leadership and it has been revised multiple times to improve its reliability and validity (Northouse, 2018). The MLQ also measures transactional leadership and passive/avoidant leadership, also known as laissez-faire leadership.

Bass (1996) describes three types of transactional leadership behaviors: contingent reward, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. Contingent reward is an exchange for a specific reward. Management by exception refers to the use of corrective criticism and negative reinforcement. The active form entails watching for errors and taking corrective action. The passive form entails using punishment or other corrective action in response to poor performance.

Based on my experience and other literature, a person exhibiting transactional leadership behaviors may not be considered a leader, but a manager. Transactional leadership can seem like an oxymoron and may more aptly be renamed transactional management. Kotter, professor emeritus of leadership at Harvard Business School, describes management as:

“a set of processes that keep an organisation functioning. They make it work today – they make it hit this quarter’s numbers. The processes are about planning, budgeting, staffing, clarifying jobs, measuring performance, and problem-solving when results did not go to plan” (Ratcliffe, 2013, para. 4).

This description of management aligns with Bass and Avolio’s views of transactional leadership. Leadership, per Kotter, “is about aligning people to the vision, that means buy-in and communication, motivation and inspiration” (Ratcliffe, 2013, para. 5). This aligns with Bass and Avolio’s transformational leadership characteristics, particularly of idealized influence and inspirational motivation.

Another perspective of transformational leadership comes from Bennis and Nanus (1985, 2007). Their model, based on research with mid-level and senior leaders, identifies

four common strategies in transformational leadership. Transformational leaders: 1) create clear vision of the future state of the organization, 2) are social architects (i.e., they create and communicate shared meanings that transform values and norms), 3) create trust by making their own positions clearly known and being reliable, and 4) creatively deploy themselves (i.e., with awareness of their strengths, immerse themselves in their work and overarching goals).

Kouzes and Posner (1996, 2017) developed a model of transformational leadership that consists of five practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. This model is not about personality nor traits, but behaviors and practice. Through researching samples of managers and subordinates in both public and private sector organizations, they developed a 30-item, 360-degree assessment to measure the practices described in their model, called the Leadership Practices Inventory (Posner & Kouzes, 1988).

The transformational approach to leadership has multiple strengths. According to Northouse (2018) it has been widely researched, is intuitively appealing, and considers followers in the leadership process, unlike some other leadership approaches that focus on the leader. Northouse further describes that transformational leadership goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals, places an emphasis on the needs and values of followers, and he reports there is evidence it is an effective form of leadership. Transformational leadership theories help us understand the leadership process in ways not fully explained by earlier leadership theories, particularly how some leaders have exceptional influence (Yukl, 2013).

Links Between Transformational Leadership and Other Constructs

This section presents a selected review of research to further our understanding of transformational leadership. I discuss research that links transformational leadership to other constructs: personality, emotional intelligence, authentic leadership, resilient leadership, and servant leadership. This is presented to understand similarities and distinctions.

Deinert, Homan, Boer, Voelpel, and Gutermann (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of 58 studies of the four transformational leadership sub-dimensions conceived by Bass and Avolio (1997) and their links to leader personality and performance. They note that many researchers have used the MLQ across different situations and settings. More than 1,000 studies were identified that had relevant search terms in their abstracts. Studies were excluded if they did not investigate the relationship between at least two of the relevant variables, included samples from clinical populations, had insufficient statistical data, or examined leadership behaviors other than transformational leadership.

In looking at the Big Five personality traits, Deinert et al. (2015) found differential dispositional antecedents and outcomes related to the transformational leadership sub-dimensions. For example, extraversion showed positive relationships with overall transformational leadership, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation, but was not significantly linked to intellectual stimulation or individualized consideration. They also found agreeableness was positively related to transformational leadership overall, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration, but not significantly related to intellectual stimulation. This research helps us understand the role of leader personality in shaping transformational leadership. It suggests that

while one specific personality trait may not predict effective leadership, certain combinations of personality traits linked to certain behaviors may lead to leader success.

Also looking at personality and transformational leaders, Hansbrough and Schyns (2018) studied why transformational leadership may appeal more strongly to some people than to others. Taking a follower-centric view, they suspect that transformational leadership may not be universally appealing to all followers, despite being considered an ideal leadership style. They conducted three empirical studies on the impact of personality and implicit leadership theories on the appeal of transformational leadership. Implicit leadership theories are thoughts or expectations that shape how individuals assess a leader and they vary with personality. The first study utilized a student sample and data were collected at two points in time. The second study replicated the results of the first with an employee sample. The third used a vignette design to provide a different way to assess the appeal of transformational leadership. They found that conscientiousness strongly impacts the appeal of transformational leadership and that dedication mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and the appeal of transformational leadership. The findings of this study imply that transformational leadership may not be universally appealing. This study helps provide an explanatory process for the varying appeal of transformational leadership.

Mathew and Gupta (2015) studied the relationship between transformational leadership and emotional intelligence (EQ) on the basis that many traits and behaviors of transformational leaders are subcomponents of EQ. For example, they specify empathy, self-confidence, charisma, and meeting the emotional needs of followers. They developed a 46-item questionnaire encompassing four transformational leadership subdimensions

based on but not identical to Bass and Avolio (1997), and five variables of EQ: identifying one's emotions, understanding other's emotions, managing emotions, internal motivation, and empathy. They surveyed 300 employees from seven different industries in India.

A correlational analysis showed that EQ and transformational leadership are related ($r = .346$). Mathew and Gupta discuss that “the ability to be aware of our and other's emotions, manage them intelligently, be sufficiently self-motivated and empathetic contribute to a transformational leadership style” (2015, p. 87). This research suggests that developing EQ can help leaders enhance their transformational leadership

Banks, McCauley, Gardner, and Guler (2016) conducted a meta-analysis to compare authentic leadership and transformational leadership theories. They discuss that authentic leadership has had significant attention amongst scholars and practitioners, has had refinements in theoretical models, and multiple validated scales. They are concerned that authentic leadership may not be sufficiently distinct from other forms of leadership (i.e., that there is construct redundancy). Their inclusion and exclusion criteria for their meta-analysis led to 100 independent samples and 25,452 individuals being analyzed.

The authors found that authentic leadership and transformational leadership are related ($p = .72$), suggesting possible construct redundancy. They further point out that this contrasts with prior research, which has provided evidence that authentic leadership and transformational leadership are distinct. The authors also found that transformational leadership outperforms authentic leadership in predicting four of the six attitudinal and performance-related outcomes that were examined (follower satisfaction, follower satisfaction with the leader, task performance, and leader effectiveness), though authentic

leadership more strongly predicts group and organizational performance. This research suggests that authentic leadership be further studied at the component level to help differentiate it from transformational leadership.

Dartey-Baah (2015) juxtaposed resilient leadership, an emerging leadership concept, with transformational leadership and transactional leadership in order to understand similarities. Through literature review of empirical studies, he assessed each leadership approach. He found that several factors within resilient leadership, namely strategic thinking, EQ, change orientation, learning, performance orientation, and collective leadership are already considered under transformational leadership and transactional leadership theories, therefore suggesting construct redundancy. According to Dartey-Baah (2015), “resilient leadership is just an effective combination of all or some dimensions under the transformational and transactional leadership styles” (p. 100).

Dierenconck, Stam, Boersma, Windt, and Alkema (2014) studied mediating mechanisms through which servant leadership and transformational leadership affect followers. Servant leadership focuses on follower needs and emphasizes humility, service orientation, and development of followers. The authors conducted two experimental studies and one field study based in the Netherlands. The first was a scenario study, focusing on the influence of transformational leadership and servant leadership on organizational commitment through need satisfaction and leadership effectiveness. The researchers manipulated the leadership style and environmental uncertainty in the scenario and measured participants’ attributions in a written assessment. They studied 184 people that all had work experience (mean age = 37 years). The second study, also a scenario study, compared servant leadership and transformational leadership to each

other and to transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership (passive/avoidant leadership). For this study, 200 hospital employees completed a written assessment. The third study aimed to ratify the findings of the prior two and entailed 200 employees of a major university participating a cross-sectional, self-report survey.

Both servant leadership and transformational leadership were found to relate to organizational commitment and work engagement, though the mediating mechanisms differed. Servant leadership was found to work through follower need satisfaction while transformational leadership was found to work through perceived leadership effectiveness. Uncertainty was an inconsistent moderating factor across their studies.

Ng and Rivera (2018) studied the transformational leadership dimension of individualized consideration in the Philippine cultural context in order to provide a clearer perspective of this dimension and to aid applicability of transformational leadership theory, management practices, and leadership development. The researchers discuss *kapwa*, the Filipino term for fellowship. Fellowship and empathy are seen as essential components to individualized consideration in an Asian context, which tends to exhibit and promote collectivism over individualism. The researchers administered the MLQ to 30 senior business leaders in Philippine private corporations and conducted in-depth interviews with them. 97% reported that their leader exhibited transformational leadership and the most mentioned dimension was individualized consideration. The researchers propose incorporating *kapwa* as a component in the individualized consideration dimension of transformational leadership. This can help researchers identify transformational leadership behaviors that can be measured in the Philippines and perhaps other collectivist cultures.

Impacts of Transformational Leadership

This section discusses research that expands our understanding of impacts of transformational leadership. In particular, this section reviews studies on how transformational leadership helps with corporate entrepreneurship, developing learning organizations, follower creativity, organizational identity strength, job satisfaction, organization-focused ideas, work motivation, stress levels, mastery goals, and diversity management.

Chang, Chang, and Chen (2017) examined how transformational leadership relates to corporate entrepreneurship, which are activities like product innovation, business venturing, and strategic renewal. The researchers collected multisource data over extended timeframes from 129 managers and 244 employees from 27 different and randomly selected manufacturing and high-tech firms in Taiwan. They found that transformational leadership and corporate entrepreneurship were positively related, with unit-level collective efficacy as the mediating variable.

Noting that researchers are motivated to find factors that influence the development of learning organizations, Rijal (2016) studied the impact of transformational leadership and a generative, adaptive organization culture on the development of learning organizations. Survey research was conducted across four organizations in India and four in Nepal, all in the IT sector. The survey was sent to managers and executives across all divisions and 300 responses were received from participants in Nepal and 280 responses were received from participants in India. The results show that transformational leadership and generative, adaptive cultures have positive influences on the development of learning organizations.

Qu, Janssen, and Shi (2015) studied transformational leadership and follower creativity, in particular looking at the roles of follower relational identification and leader creativity expectations. They studied 420 leader-follower dyads from an energy company in China and found that, through relationship identification and high creativity expectations set by the leader, transformational leadership is positively correlated with follower creativity.

Boehm, Dwertmann, Bruch, and Shamir (2015) hypothesize that CEO charisma is related to an organization's performance via two mediators: transformational leadership and organizational identity strength. Data were collected from 20,639 employees from 150 German companies. They found that CEO charisma is significantly related to transformational leadership climate ($r = .47, p < .01$) and both transformational leadership and CEO charisma are related to organizational identity strength. However, contrary to the authors' expectations, they did not find that CEO charisma or transformational leadership climate were related to the organization's performance.

Hall (2018) studied the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Hall conducted a quantitative, non-experimental study of 127 casino employees in California. He found that the more casino employees perceive their leaders as exhibiting transformational leadership styles, the higher their job satisfaction.

Deichmann and Stam (2015) studied how transformational leadership and transactional leadership motivate employees to generate organization-focused ideas (i.e., creativity that helps boost growth or provide other benefits). The authors interviewed 20 leaders and followers to develop their approach and construct a survey. They surveyed leaders and direct reports and collected 121 responses. They found that transformational

leadership is strongly associated with commitment to ideation programs, but not significantly with organization-focused idea generation. Looking at the separate components of transformational leadership, they found that articulating a vision has significant and positive correlation with commitment to ideation programs. They also found that individualized support is negatively correlated at a significant level with generation of organization-focused ideas.

Bronkhorst, Steijn, and Vermeeren (2015) studied transformational leadership and work motivation in the public sector. They surveyed a random sample of 3,105 workers drawn from a population of about 6,500 knowledge workers employed by a Dutch municipality. They analyzed 958 usable responses. The authors found that the correlation between transformational leadership and work motivation is substantial ($r = .33$). Goal setting was found to mediate this relationship and they explain that this is likely the case because the vision set by transformational leaders is communicated across the organization and converted into concrete goals. Also, because the goals of transformational leaders are likely to be challenging, based on what we know from goal-setting theory, those goals result in higher work motivation across the organization. They also found that transformational leadership is associated with perceptions of less organizational goal conflict and fewer procedural constraints.

Diebig, Bormann, and Rowold (2016) studied the relationship between leader behavior (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and cortisol concentration level in the hair of followers. Hair cortisol is a biological indicator of stress. The researchers note that stress is a challenge for workplace and individual health. In the long run it can diminish organizational effectiveness. Their sample consisted of 129

participants based in Germany, 56% of which worked full time and the rest worked part-time. 51% worked under the same manager for at least three years. Their results point to “important theoretical implications concerning the dark side of well-intended leadership behaviors” (p. 691). Further, the authors found that supporting behaviors, reduction of ambiguities, and clarifying roles and tasks are associated with low general stress levels. On the other hand, they found that ambiguity-increasing pathways, such as challenging goals, high cognitive demands, lack of support, and high role ambiguity are linked to high general stress levels. Hence, some aspects of transformational leadership represent a double-edged sword in relation to follower stress and wellbeing.

Hamstra, van Yperen, Wisse, and Sassenberg (2014) studied the relationship between achievement goals of employees and the leadership style of their manager (whether transformational or transactional leadership). The researchers note that achievement goals, which are standards of competence that individuals aim toward, and which regulate achievement activity, are known to affect motivation, interpersonal behavior, performance attainment of individuals, and impact organizational functioning. The MLQ and the achievement goal questionnaire (AGQ-R) were administered in this study. The sample consisted of 449 followers of 120 leaders from diverse organizations in the Netherlands including IT, government, and the food service industry. The researchers found that transformational leadership predicted followers’ mastery goals while transactional leadership predicted performance goals. This research implies that both transactional and transformational leadership are valuable and that organizations may utilize transactional leadership when followers need to increase performance or

output. For contexts requiring learning and development organizations may emphasize transformational leadership.

Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015) studied the role of transformational leadership and inclusive organization culture as mediators linking diversity management in public organizations and employee affective commitment (i.e., sense of belonging to and identification with the organization). Participation in this research included 10,976 Dutch public sector employees, from government, education, and the police; of these, 15% had non-native Dutch origins. transformational leadership measurement was based on Bass and Avolio's (1997) model. The other measures they used validated scales for diversity management, inclusive organization culture, and affective commitment. They found that transformational leadership has a positive effect on the inclusiveness of organizational culture and employee affective commitment. Their results show that the more employees perceive the organization to be implementing diversity management, the more they perceive their supervisor to be applying transformational leadership. Therefore, transformational leadership is an important mediator between diversity management and its outcomes.

Aarons, Ehrhart, Farahnak, and Horowitz (2017) studied congruence, discrepancy, and directionality of discrepancy between leader's self-ratings and follower's ratings of the leader regarding transformational leadership and the association with organizational culture in mental health clinics. They studied 38 mental health teams in California, which had a mean of 7.3 members per team. The MLQ was used as well as a validated survey for organizational culture. They found that there are discrepancies in supervisor and follower ratings and that the size and direction of this difference was associated with

diminished organizational culture. This effect was found to be more pronounced when supervisors rated themselves more positively than followers. This research raises the question that supervisors that may have difficulty assessing their own behaviors may have biases in their perceptions of their followers and contexts. Also, that these biases may contribute to suboptimal performance. Feedback mechanisms can be a developmental tool to help leaders understand themselves, mismatches in perceptions, and to help improve organizational culture.

Topic 1 Summary

The literature discussed in this section informs our understanding of transformational leadership in several ways. First, in how transformational leadership sits within and between other constructs, such as the other leadership theories (namely authentic leadership, servant leadership, and resilient leadership), emotional intelligence, and personality. The literature also expands the known impacts, implications, and consequences of transformational leadership.

The studies discussed have several limitations. They tend to adopt a quantitative and reductive methodology to study transformational leadership. In most cases, there is a partial operationalization of transformational leadership in terms of one of the main frameworks, e.g., that of Bass and Avolio (1997), or Kouzes and Posner (1996, 2017). The consequence is a limited gain in understanding of transformational leadership.

Another limitation of the studies is that most measurements are based on self-report, whether through surveys of transformational leadership, like the MLQ, or other surveys. This means that transformational leadership measurements are based on

perceptions of leaders and followers. Those measures may be subject to biases from social pressures, desirability, or expectations. These studies reviewed did not tend to utilize observational data collected by researchers or methodologies that were experimental and behavior based. I have addressed this limitation in my study in the recommendations section of the final chapter.

While the research I have reviewed has been conducted in various countries, lending support to the validity of the transformational leadership construct and impacts, very few of the studies researched populations in multiple countries. Cross-cultural research could strengthen the validity of findings.

Some of the studies reviewed have limitations of small sample size or data being collected from a single source (i.e., one organization or one industry). Some of the studies have used non-probability-based sampling (i.e., convenience sampling). These limitations can, in quantitative research in particular, weaken the validity of findings.

Some of the studies discussed are meta-analyses. They can be limited by the range and quality of studies that they encompass, and there may be biases in their inclusion and exclusion criteria. Implications for further research and practice are discussed in Chapter VI.

Topic 2: Adult Learning

While none of the literature I discussed so far addressed learning theory, there is an opportunity to develop our understanding of transformational leadership by making connections with experiential and transformative learning theories. Experiential and

transformative and learning theories can help us deepen our understanding of how leaders act in ways that are transformational in complex, challenging environments that may have varying levels of support and receptivity for transformational approaches. Looking at experiential and transformative learning theories in light of transformational leadership can help us gain a more integrated and nuanced view of how leaders have developed transformational leadership competencies. In this section I first define and describe experiential and transformative learning theories. Next, I discuss literature on leadership development based on experiential and transformative learning.

Experiential Learning

In his seminal work Dewey (1938) wrote that “all genuine education comes about through experience” (p. 13) and viewed experience as an event plus meaning. Dewey believes that not all experiences are genuinely or equally educative and that experience must exhibit both continuity and interaction to be educative. Continuity refers to experiences not being isolated events in time, that learners can connect their experiences to those they have had in the past or that they anticipate in the future. Interaction refers to a transaction between the individual and environment.

Fenwick (2003) categorizes experiential learning theories into five schools: 1) constructivist (reflective), in which individuals construct meanings from their experience to produce knowledge; 2) psychoanalytic (interference), relating to the unconscious that interferes with conscious thought to produce knowledge; 3) participation (situated), entailing practices in which individuals have learned to participate, such as community of practice; 4) resistance (critical culture), which consider how power circulates to repress or enhance experience and learning; and 5) co-emergence (enactivist), which entail how

cognition and the environment become simultaneously enacted and the relationship binding experience in complex systems. These five schools are distinct. Though some experiential learning theories may straddle more than one school, these different schools cannot be integrated.

A major experiential learning theorist is David Kolb, who would be categorized in the constructivist school, and who built on the work of Dewey, Piaget, and Lewin. Kolb (1984) believes experiential learning is the result of experience being transformed to create knowledge and he conceived of a cyclical, continuous process that includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. When action is taken in the final phase it becomes another set of concrete experiences and the cycle can continue. Embedded in this model is a belief that ideas are not fixed but formed and reformed through experience.

Jarvis (1987) built on Kolb's model by incorporating the biography, or life situation, of individuals and discussing two types of learning from experience: nonreflective and reflective. The former can entail repetition of a task that requires low awareness where reflection is not involved or memorization of information that has been provided.

In *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, Schon (1987) discusses tacit knowing, which is knowing in action or knowledge completed in action. He discusses reflection on action, which is stopping and thinking after action, resulting in new perspectives on experiences, behavior change, and commitments to action. He also discusses reflection in action, which entails thinking within the action. This leads to on the spot experimentation

and allows us to shape what we are doing while we are in progress. Reflection in action allows people to go beyond applying rules, facts, and procedures.

Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) depart from the constructivist approaches of Kolb, Jarvis, and Schon, and adopt a situated approach to experiential learning. Their model is more behaviorally articulated than Schon's perspective. The three stages in Boud, Keogh, and Walker's (1985,1986) model are 1) returning to and replaying experience, 2) attending to feelings provoked by experience, and 3) reevaluating the experience. They were interested in how past histories and emotion influence the learning developed through reflection on experience. In this model, learning does not simply derive from experience, instead experience and learning are positioned in an interactive dynamic.

The theory of informal and incidental learning was conceptualized by Marsick and Watkins in contrast to formal, structured learning settings in the workplace and grounded in the work of Dewey, Argyris, Schon, Lewin, and Kolb (Marsick & Watkins, 2018). Research studies have estimated that 75 to 80 percent of workplace learning is informal (Perrin & Marsick, 2012; Halliday-Wynes & Beddie, 2009). Informal and incidental learning entails individuals learning through a continuous, interactive, often non-sequential, cycle of learning from experience within a social and organizational context triggered by an unfamiliar challenge (Watkins & Marsick, 2014). The model is empirically based, originally developed in 1990 and updated in 2014, and contains the following steps: trigger, framing of trigger, examination and selection of solutions, gaining of knowledge and skills, implementation of solution, assessment of consequences, extraction of lessons learned and planning, and interpreting the anticipated

next consequences (Watkins & Marsick, 2014). The model was updated to emphasize the importance of the social context in the learning cycle (Watkins, Marsick, Wofford, & Ellinger, 2018).

Informal learning is largely invisible, taken for granted, or not seen as learning (Eraut, 2004). Marsick and Volpe (1999) reviewed studies on informal learning from experience that take place in practice and identified six characteristics: 1) integrated with work and daily routines, 2) triggered by an internal or external jolt, 3) not highly conscious, 4) haphazard and influenced by chance, 5) inductive process of reflection and action, and 6) linked to the learning of others. Marsick, Watkins, Callahan, and Volpe (2009) note that trial and error, i.e., learning from mistakes, was found to be the most common way that learning occurs.

Transformative Learning

Transformative learning theory can provide insight into the transformations created by transformational leadership, particularly in the beliefs, assumptions, and worldviews that are transformed in followers. Transformative learning, also referred to as transformational learning in the literature, is about “dramatic, fundamental change in the way we see ourselves and the world in which we live” (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 130).

O’Sullivan (2003) provides a perspective on transformative learning, saying it:

“... involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awarenesses [*sic*], our

visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy” (p. 327).

According to Taylor (2005) there are two groups of transformative learning theories. The first entails theories that have the individual as the focus of learning (i.e., the psycho-critical, psycho-developmental, and psychoanalytic perspectives) and the second entails theories that have a sociocultural focus of learning (i.e., social-emancipatory, cultural-spiritual, race-centric, and planetary approaches).

Mezirow, a foundational transformative learning theorist with a psychocritical perspective, discusses three types of meaning structures: frame of reference, habit of mind, and point of view (2000). A frame of reference is a set of assumptions and expectations that shape how we see the world and has cognitive, affective, and striving dimensions. A habit of mind is a broad set of assumptions that we use to interpret meaning from experiences. Points of view are a specific manifestation of a habit of mind, entailing immediate specific beliefs, feelings, or attitudes. Merely adding to one of these meaning structures does not entail transformative learning. For Mezirow, transformational learning occurs when we transform any of these meaning structures “to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective” (2000, p. 8).

The transformational learning process, as theorized by Mezirow, entails a 10-phase process that is not linear and does not require all steps to be completed (2000, p. 22):

1. A disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt or shame
3. A critical assessment of assumptions
4. Recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared

5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions
6. Planning a course of action
7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. Provisionally trying of new roles
9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective

The opening phase of the process causes individuals to self-examine. The disorienting dilemma could range from a sudden dramatic event or be something smaller or incremental (Mezirow, 2000). Though Mezirow's process has 10 phases, there are four key components: experience, critical reflection on the experiences, reflective discourse with others on new worldviews, and action on the new perspectives (Merriam et al., 2007).

Daloz proposes a psychodevelopmental conception of transformative learning that is seen as more holistic and intuitive than Mezirow's, which is seen as more rational, emphasizing critical reflection (Merriam et al., 2007). Daloz views education as a transformational journey, recognizing the key role of mentors as guides, storytellers, and supporters in transformational journeys (2012). Stories can enable transformation in worldviews.

Tisdell (2003) provides a cultural-spiritual perspective on transformational leadership by conceiving spirituality as a process of making meaning in our lives and considering varied cultural contexts and positionalities. In Tisdell's view, transformative learning can be enabled through cross-cultural relationships, through educators that are spiritually and culturally grounded, through community-based settings that are culturally relevant, and through environments that allow explorations on cognitive, affective, relational, and symbolic levels (2003).

Leadership Development

Haghighi's (2014) doctoral dissertation is entitled, "Transformational learning toward transformative leadership." The context of her study was the education system. She suggests that developing transformative leaders is valuable to help address hegemonic educational policies and practices that reinforce inequality and privilege. As well as transformational learning theory, critical race theory, and social justice leadership development grounded this study. She adopted a constructivist paradigm in her research, which is an epistemological approach that is relativist and subjectivist. Haghighi wrote, "meaning cannot exist without a mind, since meaning is not discovered, but constructed" (2014, p. 59). The study looked at eight educational administrators within a school district, their learning process, and their actions within their schools. These leaders had participated in social justice leadership professional development. Haghighi employed methodological triangulation, using questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and field observations for her research.

The results showed that the administrators shared similar experiences as adult learners and educational leaders and that professional development had a significant impact on them. Regarding their effectiveness as transformational leaders, some participants both articulated change processes and produced evidence for transformational leadership principles, while others fell short. Only four of the eight "took their learning beyond introspection to action. They were able and willing to establish a nexus between critical awareness and intentional systemic transformation." (Haghighi, 2014, p.110). All eight reported that the outcome of professional development

brought about change. Haghighi concluded that professional development is relevant and urgent for the implementation of change.

Hewitt, Davis, and Lashley (2014) studied transformational and transformative leadership in a leadership development program. Their description of transformational leadership aligns with earlier descriptions. They use the transformational leadership articulation of Sun and Leithwood (2012), which is based on their research on a large-scale data set and a meta-analytic review, and they found:

a) Developing a shared vision and building goal consensus; (b) holding high performance expectations; (c) providing individualized support; (d) providing intellectual stimulation; (e) modeling valued behaviors, beliefs, and values; (f) strengthening school culture; (g) building structures to enable collaboration; (h) engaging parents and the wider community; (i) focusing on instructional development; (j) using contingent rewards; and (k) managing by exception (pp. 428-429).

While using contingent reward and managing by exception are characteristics of transactional leadership, as described by Bass and Avolio (1997), Sun and Leithwood (2012) note these two characteristics were found far less frequently in their analysis compared to other characteristics they noted.

Transformational leadership is distinguished from transformative leadership, which for some takes a Freirean approach of conscientization, involving social justice and democracy. For Paolo Freire, “personal empowerment and social transformation are inseparable processes” (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 140). Hewitt et al. operationalize transformative learning with the following description from Shields (2010):

(a) Combination of both critique and promise; (b) attempts to effect both deep and equitable changes; (c) deconstruction and reconstruction of the knowledge frameworks that generate inequity; (d) acknowledgment of power and privilege; (e) emphasis on both individual achievement and the public good; (f) a focus on

liberation, democracy, equity, and justice; and (g) evidence of moral courage and activism (p. 562).

In this study, the leadership development program being researched is called IMPACT-V, which is a grant-funded program across a number of education institutions across North Carolina. The researchers analyzed baseline and summative artifacts of transformational leadership and transformative leadership to assess in what ways and to what extent the leadership discourses developed over the program. Eleven program participants consented to have their materials (artifacts) analyzed – these were fairly open-ended written documents, though some prompts were provided.

The researchers found that the program promoted elements of both transformational leadership and transformative leadership. The program was found to promote school change, leadership, and personal growth. In the summative artifacts, the elements of transformational leadership most frequently appearing were: developing a shared vision and building goal consensus, building structures to enable collaboration, leading for strategic and systematic change, and modeling valued behaviors, beliefs, and values.

Terrell and Rosenbusch (2013) studied developmental experiences of global business leaders to gain insight on what experiences they found developmental, what they learned from those experiences, and how they learned and developed from those experiences. The researchers adopted a phenomenological research method. They found that global leaders develop through first-hand global leadership experience. They learn cultural sensitivity and they require a unique set of global leadership competencies. They are driven by curiosity, openness, and a desire to learn.

Generett and Welch (2018) published an article titled, “Transformative leadership: Lessons learned through intergenerational dialogue.” This article, while not a research study, takes a biographical, life history approach to looking at the development of transformative leadership. The article describes dialogues between a dean at a school of higher education and a new associate dean that suggest intergenerational dialogues are meaningful and important to understand leadership.

Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano (2014) found through a longitudinal study over three consecutive offerings of a leadership development program that leaders note shifts in how they make sense of the world. This research shows that developmental diversity and increases in conceptual complexity are often inherent in the leadership development process. In the *DNA of Development*, Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano (2018) discuss how cognitive-developmental theory and a developmental approach to leadership can help to make sense of learning and leading. Their model for growth and capacity building has four pillar practices: teaming, mentoring, leadership roles, and collegial inquiry. Each of these is an opportunity for leaders to grow with support from others and helps leaders gain new perspectives on their thoughts, behaviors, and identity.

Leadership development can be seen as occurring within a holding environment, described by Kegan (1982) as a setting that can help adults expand the ways they make meaning across their lifespan. Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano describe a holding environment as “the context in and out of which a person grows” (2014, p. 120). Drago-Severson (2004) discusses that to help individuals grow, holding environments need to contain challenges and supports, namely, to recognize how people currently make meaning, act as a stimulant to motivate people to extend their meaning-making system,

and provide continuity and stability. Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano (2014) found that the holding environment is recognized by leaders as a powerful influence on how they grow and lead.

Topic 2 Summary

Theories, perspectives, and research within experiential learning, transformative learning, and leadership development literature helps provide context for studying the application and development of transformational leadership.

The methodology of the research reviewed in this section varies from approaches that are more constructivist, like that of Haghighi (2014) and Generett and Welch (2018) to approaches that are more empirical, like that of Hewitt et al. (2014) and Terrell and Rosenbusch (2013).

Social justice appeared as a theme in the literature in this section, while it was absent from literature in the prior section. This is not surprising because the field of adult education has roots in social justice. For example, Lindeman, who wrote *The Meaning of Adult Education* (1926), believes individual growth can only happen if there is a simultaneous development of society and that the point of adult education is to transform the world.

Critique and Conclusions

Critique

Almost all the studies reviewed on transformational leadership were exclusively quantitative. Even the studies that incorporated interviews tended to do so with a view toward quantitative instrument development or quantitative analysis of interview

findings. There is room for and value in a more nuanced approach that qualitative research can provide.

Although the studies considered a wide variety of organizational contexts and industries, for example information technology, logistics, manufacturing, government, food service, casino, hospital, and university, there was a lack of research that explicitly focused on professional services firms (e.g., consulting, financial, or marketing services firms). As economies around the world move towards less manufacturing and more services industries, it is important to develop more understanding about transformational leadership in professional service contexts.

The leader-follower dyad has always been relevant in the workplace, though in professional services firms, it may be considered incomplete in representing the work dynamic. As we have seen from the literature, transformational leadership models do not explicitly address leading or working with clients. Clients are increasingly becoming integral to the daily work process in professional services organizations, therefore one could argue that the leader and follower dyad needs to evolve to a triad between leader, follower, and client. Clients are not just passive customers of services, they are intimately part of the work flow and influence processes. If research is conducted that factors in clients, it could enable an insightful extension of transformational leadership theory. Indeed, clients and client relations could be incorporated into many models of leadership beyond transformational leadership.

Each of the transformational leadership studies discussed tended to use one of the main models of transformational leadership (e.g., the models of Bass and Avolio, Bennis and Nanus, or Kouzes and Posner). Relying on one conceptualization of transformational

leadership can lead to a shortsightedness of the phenomena being studied. A qualitative approach, which I describe in Chapter III, can look more holistically at transformational leadership, encompassing more variations and sub-dimensions than can be considered in a quantitative study. Qualitative research could potentially help pave the way to extend or merge transformational leadership frameworks.

A challenge with studying transformational leadership, highlighted from the literature review, is that it suffers from a lack of conceptual clarity. Northouse (2018) points out that “because [transformational leadership] covers such a wide range of activities and characteristics – including creating a vision, motivating, being a change agent, building trust, giving nurturance, and acting as a social architect, to name a few – it is difficult to define exactly the parameters of transformational leadership” (p. 180). Is transformational leadership just good leadership? It seems that there is construct overlap with other leadership approaches. Banks et al. (2016) note, “the relationship between authentic and transformational leadership is large in magnitude, suggesting construct redundancy... neither authentic leadership nor transformational leadership add noticeable incremental validity beyond the other construct” (p.634). Dartey-Baah (2015) reports that “*resilient leadership* is just an effective combination of all or some dimensions under the *transformational* and *transactional* leadership styles” (p. 100).

The studies reviewed show many mediating and moderating variables affecting the dimensions and impacts of transformational leadership. Every model created is a simplification of the phenomenon it is representing, though with all the research available on mediating and moderating variables in transformational leadership, the models can be

enhanced. There is opportunity to incorporate these variables into more comprehensive models of transformational leadership.

Self-report measures tend to be used in studies of transformational leadership. There are limitations and biases with self-report measures. There is scope for research that adopts observation-based methods or experimental studies that are behavior-based. Also, there is tremendous scope for understanding transformational leadership through narrative, biographical, and life history approaches, as elicited by Generett and Welch (2018).

Conclusions

Based on the selected review of the literature I conducted, there appear to gaps in our understanding of how transformational leadership is learned and developed. In part this is due to the lack of research conducted in this area and in part because the research that has been conducted tends to be focused on a small population, sector, or context. Further implications for research and practice will be discussed in Chapter VI.

Although transformational leadership is not a new theory, attention to how it is developed and enacted can lead to new perspectives for researchers and practitioners that are looking at ways to develop and enhance transformational leadership. There is value in leveraging transformative and experiential learning theory to help understand the development of transformational leadership in leaders of professional services businesses, with a view to help develop this form of leadership in future leaders in these industries. The perspective of transformational leadership in professional services business is not addressed in the literature. transformational leadership has the potential to help with

many challenges that organizations face, particularly in times of increasing complexity, therefore it should be further studied.

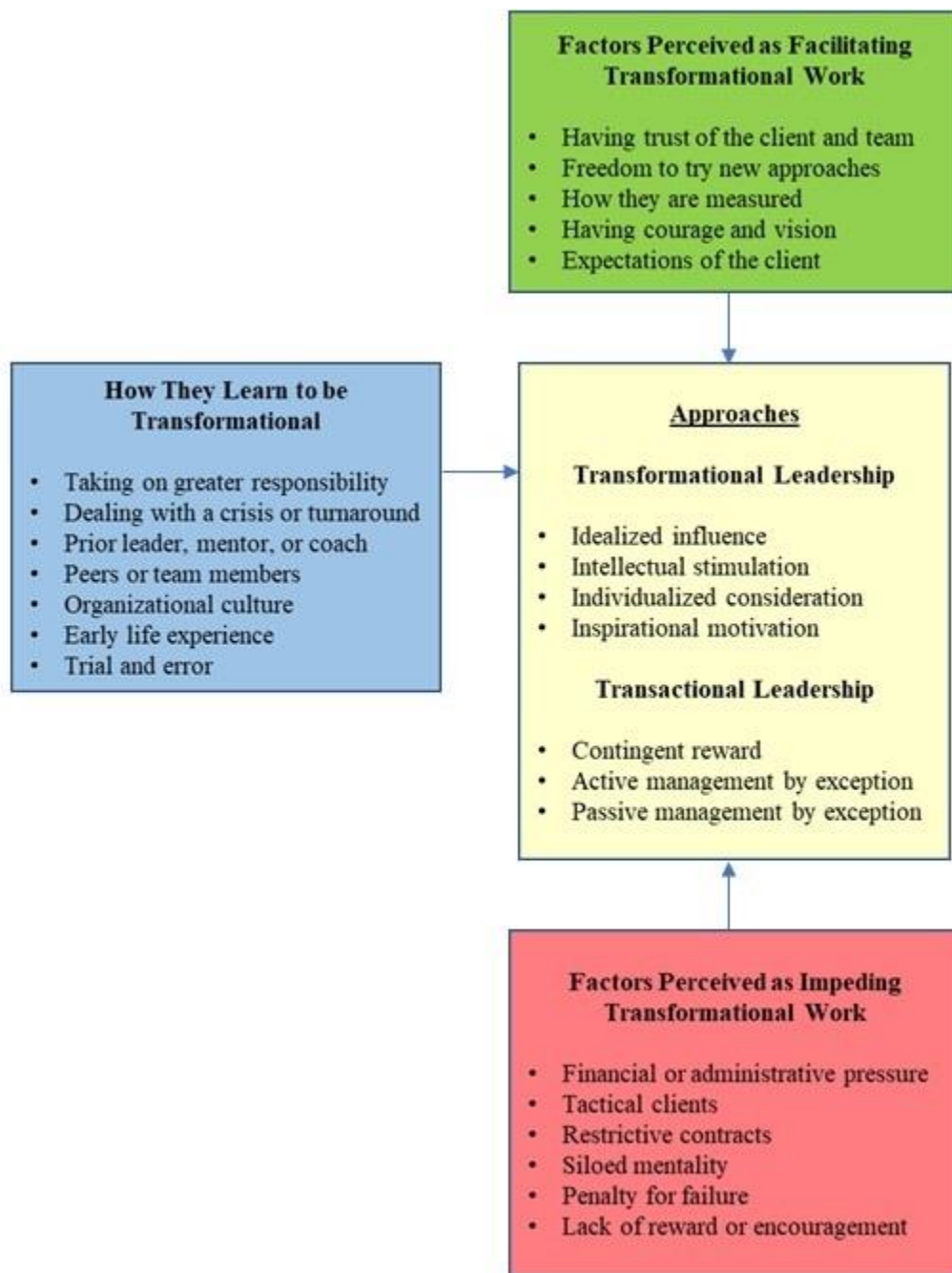
Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, defined as a tool that serves as a repository for findings and a support for analysis and interpretation, contains descriptors based on literature, pilot findings, and the researcher's own hunches (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). My conceptual framework is based on my research questions, literature I have reviewed, my pilot interview findings, and my own experiences and perceptions. The categories in my conceptual framework are: 1) Approaches that leaders who are seen as transformational take, 2) How they learn to be transformational leaders, 3) Factors perceived as facilitating their transformational work, and 4) Factors perceived as impeding their transformational work. These four categories are aligned with my research questions. Each box in my conceptual framework is aligned to theoretical foundations from the literature and contains categories of responses found via my data collection methods (data collection methods are described in Chapter III).

This conceptual framework was revised as my study progressed. I made enhancements to the framework as I learned about salient components I missed and elements in the framework that were not represented in the study data.

The non-graphical conceptual framework can be found in Appendix A. Below is the graphical depiction of the conceptual framework.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments.

The study aimed to provide insights to the approaches of leaders of professional services businesses that are considered transformational. These approaches may be leveraged by other leaders and future leaders in professional services industries. Insight into the factors that help or hinder transformational leadership can help senior executives to adapt the climate, structures, culture, processes, or system dynamics that support transformational leadership. Insight into the ways that leaders learn to be transformational can be leveraged into developmental plans and leadership development initiatives for current and future leaders in professional services industries. This study was among the first on transformational leadership that encompasses clients; other studies focused on the direct reports and the organization that the leaders and direct reports work for. It was intended that insights from this study could potentially point to ways to further enhance transformational leadership theory.

The research questions addressed in this study were:

1. What actions do CEOs who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?
2. How do these CEOs describe how they learned to be transformational?
3. What factors do these CEOs perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

This chapter discusses the methodology I used to address these research questions. The subsequent sections of this chapter are: rationale for qualitative research methodology, rationale for case study methodology, research sample, information needed, research design, data collection methods, data analysis and synthesis, literature on methods, ethical considerations, issues of trustworthiness, limitations of the study, and chapter summary.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Methodology

There are many ways to think about and conduct research. Research methods fall within paradigms. A paradigm is defined as “a philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws, and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated” (“Paradigm,” n.d.). Paradigms help us to discuss the nature of reality (ontology), how we know what we know (epistemology), and how inquirers can pursue knowledge (methodology). Paradigms “are the starting points of givens that determine what inquiry is and how it is to be practiced” (Guba, 1990, p. 18). This research study followed a qualitative methodology situated within the constructivist paradigm. The aim of this section is to

explain why qualitative methodology within the constructivist paradigm was the desired approach to study the application and development of transformational leadership in executives that lead professional services businesses.

I was interested in uncovering interpretive nuances about transformational leadership that have not been elicited or discussed in prior research. I anticipated that the interactions I would have with research participants, and my role as a key instrument in this research, would help encourage them to formulate and articulate knowledge about how they apply and how they have developed transformational leadership. Prior to my interviews with them, they may not have explicitly formed knowledge in the same way about their application and development of transformational leadership.

The qualitative research methods of constructivists aim to recognize the constructions that exist in the area they are inquiring into and bring them into as much consensus as possible (Guba, 1990). The inquiry process involves hermeneutics and dialectics. Hermeneutics entails describing individual constructions as accurately as possible while dialectics entail comparing these various constructions, including the inquirer's own, so that each respondent confronts the constructions (Guba, 1990). The qualitative methodology of constructivists maintains channels of communication between inquirers, participants, and other inquirers, so that information and sophistication can be continuously improved (Guba, 1990). I anticipated that in this research study, varied individual constructions of transformational leadership would be expressed, which I would describe and compare to build a holistic picture. During the study I kept channels of communication open. The reflexivity entailed in qualitative research means I should

indicate how my background, culture, and experience shaped my interpretations and the themes I reported.

Within qualitative research methods in a constructivist paradigm, there is preference for an expansionist rather than reductionist stance, a presumption of the human inquirer as the major form of instrumentation, an emergent rather than preordained design strategy, and selection rather than intervention style as focus for the inquiry (Lincoln, 1990). There is also a preference for natural (in situ) rather than laboratory context, a variable rather than invariant treatment mode, patterns as opposed to variables, and an invitational and participatory mode as opposed to control (Lincoln, 1990). Rather than start with a theory, as in postpositivism, constructivist inquirers seek to understand the context, interpret what they find, and generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning (Creswell, 2014). In this research study, I did not develop and testing hypotheses. To best answer the research questions, I took an expansionist stance, stayed flexible on the predetermined research design, looked for patterns, interpreted, and operated in an invitational and participatory mode. By approaching this study in a dialogic way in a natural setting (i.e., in the field rather than in a lab), I was able to directly hear and report the ideology and practice of research participants.

Rationale for Case Study Methodology

This research study was an exploratory case study of an ecosystem of operating companies and selected clients they serve. It employed a qualitative case study methodology that emphasized the work, career, and life contexts of the research participants to study their application and development of transformational leadership.

Yin (2014) puts forward a twofold definition of case study, incorporating both scope and features: 1) it investigates contemporary phenomenon in depth within its context, particularly when the boundary between phenomenon and context are unclear; and 2) it typically has more variables of interest than data points, relies on multiple sources of evidence, and data collection and analysis are guided by theoretical propositions.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) describe case study research as an exploratory methodology with significant interaction with research participants, providing an in-depth picture, looking at bounded system(s), using in-depth data collection methods, and multiple data sources. Case study research can be effective within a relativist perspective, capturing multiple realities, meanings, and constructions that come from various people that bring light to the topic (Yin, 2014).

To address the research questions, in this study I aimed to generate propositional and naturalistic generalizations. Propositional generalizations are a researcher's summary of interpretations in case study research, while naturalistic generalizations are a researcher's own personal experience added to the propositional generalizations (Stake, 1995).

Another benefit of the case study research approach is that it is effective at answering "how" questions (Yin, 2014). How questions are difficult to answer by survey methodology or analysis of archival data. How questions are more exploratory in nature and this study explored how transformational leaders lead and how their ways of leading have developed.

One strength of the case study approach is that it allows for a way of studying rare phenomena. Transformational leaders are not commonly found in the world and case study research is a way of studying these rare leaders.

Finally, the case study approach can help shed light on elements that might be missing or underdeveloped in theories about transformational leadership. Most other research on transformational leadership has not utilized case study methodology.

Research Site and Sample

The site of this study was a large, global, professional services conglomerate organization headquartered in Europe that employs over 100,000 people. In this study, I will use the pseudonym “ProfCo” to refer to this organization. The sample for the study consisted of 10 CEOs across 10 different businesses within this professional services organization. Individuals that meet the following criteria were selected for the study:

1. Senior business leaders (over 15 years of work experience) that work within the organization.
2. Have been working within the same organization for at least five years.
3. Primarily client-facing, i.e., they spend most of their working hours on engagements with and for clients.
4. Lead a large team, with over 50 employees reporting into them.
5. Lead an international business, working with clients or team members in more than one country.

6. Have been identified as a transformational leader by multiple C-level executives at the headquarters of the conglomerate.

This study employed a purposive sampling method. A purposive sampling method is nonrandom and entails selecting participants or sites that are information-rich and will best help researchers understand the research problem and research questions (Creswell, 2014). Purposeful selection frames and accesses appropriate data that fits the purpose of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

I asked several C-level executives at the corporate headquarters of the global conglomerate to identify 10-15 leaders each across the businesses that they viewed as transformational and that satisfy the other criteria listed above. In addition to providing them the criteria, I also provided them a definition and descriptions of transformational leadership from Bass and Avolio (1997). I selected 12 CEOs among the names provided, prioritizing the names that were provided more than once. I anticipated that the CEOs I would study would be based in several different countries. All leaders in the site organization are fluent English speakers.

I contacted these 12 CEOs by email (see Appendix D: email correspondence) to explain the purpose of the study, indicate that they were identified as a transformational leader by senior executives, the expected commitments for participation, provide an overview of the research, to invite their participation, and to sign an informed consent form. In that same email, I also asked them to provide the names, titles, and email addresses of two of their direct reports (team members that report to them) that I could approach to invite to interview as well. Of these 12 CEOs I invited, 10 agreed to participate in the study. Upon receiving their agreement to participate, the names of two

direct reports, and signed informed consent form, I then reached out by email to the direct reports and provided the same type of introduction and consent form, though the language was oriented around studying their manager (see Appendix D). For all participants, I indicated that their participation was voluntary.

For the people I invited to participate in the study, I sent them the requirements for participation and the approved informed consent form required by the Internal Review Board of Teachers College, Columbia University (see Appendix E for the form for the CEOs and Appendix F for the form for team members). The forms contained information on potential risks of this research and their rights as participants.

For the 10 CEOs that participated, I invited them to take the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X-Short (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ is the most commonly used measurement for transformational leadership and which has been revised multiple times to improve its reliability and validity (Northouse, 2018). See Appendix J for further information on the MLQ.

Information Needed

The information needed to address the research questions in this study was determined by the conceptual framework (see Appendix A: conceptual framework). The four categories of information needed in most qualitative studies are: contextual, perceptual, demographic, and theoretical (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). I aimed to seek information in each of these categories. The following four subsections describe the information I collected to address the research questions.

Contextual

The contextual data for this study encompassed information about the organizations that my research participants work for and their client's organizations. I recorded information on the organizational structures, team structures and roles, organizational histories, products and services, business strategy, mission, values, work environments, operating procedures, and policies.

I collected this contextual data by reviewing the websites and available documents (e.g., company annual reports) of the organizations relevant to my study sample. In addition, some relevant contextual data was collected during my interviews and my document review of archival client satisfaction data.

The contextual data helped provide an understanding of the work environments and cultures of my research participants and helped me to 1) corroborate findings from interviews and document review and 2) understand the impact of the organization and work environments on how transformational leaders enact and develop their leadership.

Perceptual

Perceptions of how leaders enact and develop transformational leadership and their perceptions of the factors that help and hinder their leadership were collected through in-depth interviews with the leaders identified for the study, with particular emphasis on descriptions of examples of prior situations and experiences. Secondary in-depth interviews, also aimed to gain descriptions and perceptions, were conducted with their direct reports. Written comments within client satisfaction data, which I also reviewed,

also contained perceptions. The secondary interviews and archival data review aimed to provide alternate perceptions and interpretations related to the research questions.

Demographic

At the end of each interview I collected demographic information from the participants. I noted their gender, age, ethnicity, education level, work history, and residence (city/town and country). I asked for information on where they have previously lived.

This demographic information was used to help with cross-participant analysis and to look at understanding underlying factors in perceptions and experiences.

Theoretical

Theoretical information from academic literature helped me understand the topics involved in my research, supported my methodology, and helped me analyze my findings. The literature review provided in Chapter II contains the relevant literature I reviewed during my entire research process and the literature helped guide my work. As my research progressed, I updated my literature review to reflect various expansions and updates.

The literature review in this dissertation considers two major areas: transformational leadership and adult learning. Within transformational leadership the following subcategories were reviewed: 1) transformational leadership definitions, 2) links between transformational leadership and other constructs, and 3) impacts of

transformational leadership. Within adult learning, the following subcategories were reviewed: 1) experiential learning and 2) transformative learning.

Research Design

The list in this section outlines the steps, in sequential order, I took to carry out the research. The following two sections of this chapter elaborate on data collection and analysis in more detail.

1. Define the research topic and research questions.
2. Literature review of transformational leadership and adult learning.
3. Conduct pilot studies to determine usefulness of approaches and inform interview protocols.
4. Determine methodology and sample criteria.
5. Undergo proposal hearing and complete revisions.
6. Apply for Internal Review Board approval.
7. Obtain signed letter of agreement from site organization authorizing my conducting of the study and my access to the client satisfaction data.
8. Gain access to client satisfaction data system (for document review portion of the methodology).
9. Identify research participants and send them letter of invitation, informed consent form, and participant's rights.
10. Schedule and conduct interviews with the CEOs and their direct reports.
11. Transcribe and code interviews.
12. Request for the CEOs to complete the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

13. Analyze client satisfaction data and other relevant documents.
14. Establish inter-rater reliability. I recruited two colleagues to code one entire interview to assess inter-rater reliability.
15. Analyze and synthesize data.
16. Write up findings and analysis.

Data Collection Methods

A selected literature review preceded the data collection to inform the study. Data collection in case study research often involves several sources and methods to achieve triangulation, which provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). The following sub-sections will describe the methods of investigation used. My primary method was interviews with the leaders. The supplemental methods were interviews with direct reports and document review. The three methods are connected in that they all served to provide insight, from differing perspectives, into the development, application, challenges, and supports to transformational leadership in professional services businesses. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1985) was used as an additional way of confirming that the CEOs in the study were indeed transformational leaders.

Interviews

Qualitative interviews with participants are typically conducted face-to-face or over the phone and involve open-ended questions that are few in number that are intended to prompt sharing of views and opinions of participants (Creswell, 2014).

Interviews, an important source of case study evidence, resemble guided conversations, requiring the interviewers to satisfy the needs of their line of inquiry while putting forward nonthreatening questions (Yin, 2014).

Advantages of using interviews in qualitative research are that they are useful when participants cannot be observed directly, interviews can provide historical information, and they allow researchers control over questioning (Creswell, 2014). Interviews are often the primary data collection method in qualitative case study research because of the ability to produce detailed descriptions and they enable researchers to clarify and probe (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

I conducted one-on-one interviews with 10 CEOs identified as transformational that lasted approximately one hour. I aimed to conduct one-on-one interviews with two direct reports (team members) of each of these CEOs, lasting approximately 30 minutes. The purpose of the secondary interviews, with the direct reports, was to learn the context for the leadership style and impacts of their managers. Also, the direct reports provided additional valuable perspectives on the factors that helped and hindered the leadership of their manager.

These interviews were conducted in-person where possible at the workplace of the participants in a private office or meeting room. If that was not possible or convenient, they were conducted over Zoom, a video-conferencing platform. Due to the preference of a few participants, their interviews were conducted via telephone. The interviews were recorded with the permission of the research participants. The recordings were transcribed. In two instances, participants did not consent to be recorded. For those

participants, I took hand-written notes during the interview on their responses that related to my research questions.

These interviews were semi-structured. The interview protocols for the CEOs and their direct reports are available for review in Appendix G. The protocol was developed with guidance from my advisor and based on pilot interviews conducted in 2018 with three client service leaders in three different businesses within the site organization, two based in North America and one based in Europe. The pilot interviews averaged about one hour each. As I did not have Internal Review Board approval to study those leaders, I am not able to discuss specifics of my findings. However, I gained insight into the high motivation these leaders have to discuss their work. I gained insight into how they lead, how they have developed as leaders, and the supports and challenges they have as leaders. My findings from these interviews helped me to develop the conceptual framework for this study (see Appendix A) and the coding scheme (see Appendix H).

These three pilot interviews I conducted could be considered the field-tests of my interview protocol for the client service leaders, since I asked essentially the same questions as in my protocol and followed a semi-structured format that entailed probing on their responses and being flexible with how the interviewees responded. I did not field-test the interview protocol for the direct reports, however those questions are necessarily aligned to the questions for the client service leaders, which were tested.

I safeguarded the interview data by storing recordings only on a password-protected local computer hard drive and backed-up on a password protected external hard drive kept in a lockable drawer.

I took steps to preserve confidentiality and anonymity of the interview data. These steps will be detailed in the Ethical Considerations section later in this chapter.

Document Reviews

Qualitative research methods can go beyond interview and observation to also encompass analysis of documents. The documents studied could be public or private. For this study I had access to the client satisfaction feedback survey data for the site organization. This encompasses quantitative and qualitative data for hundreds of clients of the site organization. There are thousands of entries from the past few years. I focused my analysis on the qualitative data – collecting and analyzing comments that speak to transformational and transactional leadership. The data can be sectioned according to the business unit or client. I aimed to keep the analysis focused on the data that was relevant to the business units and clients of my participants. I used the text search function with the client satisfaction feedback platform to find examples to illustrate and corroborate themes found from my interviews. Examples are presented in the Findings chapter. I kept this data confidential.

I also collected and analyzed other relevant documents that were available to me, for example articles and blog posts of leaders in the business, company websites, company promotional videos, interviews with leaders from the business, case studies from the businesses, and company promotional videos. For both the client satisfaction data and these public documents, I used data to affirm or disaffirm accounts, perspectives, and themes from the interviews.

Document review, as a data collection method, has several strengths. It enabled me to obtain the views of clients without needing to interview them. Though the views of clients are important in understanding the transformational leadership of leaders of professional services businesses, I would likely not have been able to gain permission to interview clients of the leaders in my study.

Additional strengths of reviewing documents as a data collection method are that they enable the researcher to collect the language of participants, documents can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher, it is an unobtrusive source of information, it represents data that participants have given their attention to, and documents do not require transcription since they are written evidence (Creswell, 2014).

I was given access to the site organization's proprietary tool and database for collecting client satisfaction data. The head of the site organization's performance optimization team approved my access of this data and the performance optimization director helped to orient and navigate me through the data.

This client satisfaction data is stored on the site organization's computer servers and is password protected. The data that I retrieved from the client satisfaction data portal was stored in a password protected computer hard drive and backed up in a password protected external hard drive kept in a lockable drawer. I preserved the confidentiality and anonymity of the client satisfaction data by taking steps that I describe further in the Ethical Considerations section of this chapter.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Whereas quantitative research can have a linear approach to data analysis and synthesis, qualitative research often has multiple levels that are more interactive and interrelated. Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) characterize qualitative research as flexible and that the analytic process may be approached differently by different researchers. Creswell (2014) suggests six interrelated steps for data analysis in qualitative research: 1) organizing and preparing data for analysis (e.g., transcribing interviews, sorting and arranging data), 2) reading through all data for a general sense and to form overall meanings and impressions, 3) coding data (i.e., bracketing chunks and assigning categories), 4) generating a description of the setting or people and categories or themes for analysis, 5) interrelating themes and descriptions, and 6) interpreting the meaning of the themes and descriptions. I followed these six interrelated steps to manage, organize, analyze, and synthesize my data in preparation to report my findings.

The goal of data analysis and synthesis in case study research is analytic generalization, which can be “either (a) corroborating, modifying, rejecting, or otherwise advancing theoretical concepts that you referenced in designing your case study or (b) new concepts that arose upon the completion of your case study” (Yin, 2014, p. 41). Analytic generalization differs from statistical generalization, the more familiar method of generalizing, which refers to generating inferences about populations based on empirical data. I aimed to form analytic generalizations about the application, development, supports, and challenges to transformational leadership in professional services businesses.

In qualitative research, data analysis is often both inductive and deductive (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Inductive analysis entails forming a comprehensive set of themes by abstracting patterns and categories in the data (Creswell, 2014). Deductive analysis entails reviewing the data with the lens of those themes to assess if additional evidence can verify those themes or if additional information is needed (Creswell, 2014). My data analysis began the moment I started conducting and transcribing interviews and the moment I gained access to the client satisfaction data. I followed both an inductive and deductive approach. At early stages, my analysis was inductive in that I viewed the interview transcripts without particular theoretical frameworks. Initially, I did some open coding of transcripts, meaning that I segmented the data into meaningful expressions and concepts. This was done with the view to see what broad picture was emerging, without the constraints or limitations of particular theoretical frameworks. After this inductive analysis, I went back to my conceptual framework and the Bass and Avolio (1997) framework of transformational leadership and leveraged those for deductive analysis. My initial inductive analysis helped me with the deductive analysis for my first research question, since I could cluster some of what I initially coded into Bass and Avolio's categories.

My conceptual framework (see Appendix A) was the focal point for my management of the data as the categories it contains served as repositories or frames for my data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). I viewed the raw data and categorized them within my conceptual framework, updating the framework by making additions when I saw new categories emerging and deletions when I saw existing categories not represented in the data. My study findings did not line up exactly with my pilot findings: some of my views

around research questions two and three were broadened by my study findings. In the next chapter I will detail my findings.

I coded my data according to themes. A theme captures matters of interest or importance to my research questions (Robson & McCartan, 2017). As I looked at the data, I noted down possible themes, sub-themes, inferences, and hunches. I started the thematic coding process early and kept revisiting it, because I expected that later phases of research would prompt me to rethink the work I did at earlier stages and my understandings further along the path could lead me to interpret the data in a different way (Robson & McCartan, 2017). After completing about half of the interviews, I found a pattern of responses that shifted my understanding for research questions two and three. Please see Appendix H for the coding scheme.

I gave a full transcript of a 30-minute interview with one of the team members to two colleagues along with my coding scheme. I asked them to read the entire interview transcript and code it. This was to see the extent to which they coded similarly to me and to establish inter-rater reliability. After discussion around reconciling differences, there was 100% agreement on the coding for that interview.

My research methodology entailed collecting a large quantity of data through approximately 20 hours of interviewing and reviewing thousands of text entries in the client satisfaction survey database. Not all the information could be used in this study. Some of the data were less relevant to the research questions in this study. For example, some of the interviewees shared perspectives on their personal business philosophies, nuances about people they learned from, happenings in their business, or their business

strategy. The data that were not relevant to the major themes found in the analysis were excluded.

In the analysis and synthesis process I paid attention to my own preconceptions and assumptions. To understand subjective meanings, findings need to be informed by the data rather than the researcher's preconceptions (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

I paid close attention to descriptions and themes that are corroborated between the interviews with CEOs, interviews with direct reports, and archival data. I detail the corroboration in the Findings chapter and in the findings charts in Appendices K and M. I looked for differences, for example if there are differences between espoused theory (i.e., what the CEOs say is their leadership approach) and the theory in use, which was provided by direct reports and clients satisfaction data. The summarized data are discussed in Chapter IV (Findings) and the synthesized data are discussed Chapter V (Analysis, Discussion, and Synthesis).

Literature on Methods

This section presents the strengths and weaknesses of each method of data collection used in this study, as discussed in literature.

Interviews

Some advantages of using interviews in qualitative research are that they are useful when participants cannot be observed directly, interviews can provide historical information, and they allow researchers control over questioning (Creswell, 2014). Interviews are often the primary data collection method in qualitative case study research

because of the ability to produce detailed descriptions and interviews enable researchers the ability to clarify and probe (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Robson and McCartan (2017) discuss several advantages of interviews: they offer flexible and adaptable ways of data collection, have the potential to provide rich and highly illuminating data, allow follow ups and investigating underlying motives, and allow assessment of non-verbal cues.

Interviews also have several disadvantages. According to Robson and McCartan (2017) they are time-consuming, biases are difficult to rule out, it may be difficult to gain cooperation of participants, respondents can get fatigued and become unwilling to continue, and interviews require ample preparation and arrangements. Creswell (2014) discusses that information provided during interviews is indirect (filtered through the views of interviewees), interviews do not occur in the natural field setting (they are at a designated place and time), the researcher's presence may bias responses, and not all people are equally articulate or perceptive. Bloomberg and Volpe (2016) discuss that interviews are limited because not all participants are equally cooperative, interviews require researcher skill, and because they are not neutral tools of data gathering (i.e., there is an interaction effect between the interviewer and interviewee).

Document Reviews

Document analysis has multiple strengths. It is unobtrusive (i.e., you can obtain views of people without needing to interview or observe them), the data is permanent (and can be re-analyzed), and it can enable longitudinal analysis (Robson & McCartan, 2017). Additional strengths of reviewing documents as a data collection method are that

they enable the researcher to collect the language of participants, can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher, it represents data that participants have given their attention to, and they do not require transcription since they are written evidence (Creswell, 2014). Documents are potentially rich in portraying values and beliefs of participants in the setting because they are often produced during everyday events (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

There are also several weaknesses of document review as a method of data collection. Document availability may be limited or partial, there might be biases or distortions in the data (since they tend not to be created for research studies), and causal relationships are difficult to assess (Robson & McCartan, 2017). Additional limitations of document review are that not all documents are produced by articulate or perceptive people, the information may be protected or private, it may be hard for the researcher to access the data, materials may be incomplete, and the documents may not be authentic or accurate (Creswell, 2014).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues can arise in any research phase and researchers need to focus on safeguards to protect participant rights including informed consent, protecting participants from harm, and confidentiality (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). I considered the ethical issues that might arise in this study and I took the necessary steps to address these issues. Please refer to Appendices E and F for the participant informed consent forms. These forms were emailed to participants (as part of the information in Appendix D:

email correspondence) for them to review and sign. All participation in this research was voluntary.

I took steps to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of my research participants, the organizations they work for, and their clients. I used pseudonyms in my analysis and reporting. I restricted the information provided about each individual case study to help ensure the preservation of their anonymity. All files have been saved on a password protected local computer hard drive and backed up in a password protected external hard drive that has been kept in a lockable drawer. After I defend my dissertation, I will delete the interview recordings.

To the extent that any trade secrets or proprietary information were revealed during interviews, I kept those confidential.

I followed the guidelines of the Teachers College, Columbia University Internal Review Board and the social and behavioral research course of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. The topics discussed during the interviews were not likely to be psychologically disturbing or have the potential for harm. I was committed to appropriately address any instance of potential harm that could have arisen in this study. Similarly, the themes reported in the study were unlikely to cause disturbance or harm.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Realist and critical realist science aim to discern and explain natural and social laws usually in cause and effect relationships. Constructivist science, which is relativist, aims to create idiographic knowledge, usually in the form of pattern theories, webs of mutual and plausible influence that are expressed as working hypotheses or temporary, time- and place-bound knowledge (Lincoln, 1990). In constructivism, researchers may not claim certitude because they acknowledge that knowledge is a social construction and there is interpretation. In constructivism there is a shift from rigor to relevance. In the qualitative methods of constructivist researchers, findings are not generalizable, while findings from quantitative approaches of postpositivists sometimes are.

Constructivism has different criteria for trustworthiness than other paradigms. There is an important distinction between process and data. In positivism and postpositivism, the methods employed attest to the strength of the conclusions (Lincoln, 1990). In constructivism the effectiveness of the research is determined by the enhanced sophistication of stakeholders and in the comprehension of avenues of action. In postpositivism, the effectiveness of the research is determined by increased understanding as a form of knowledge. “Constructions are not more or less ‘true,’ in any absolute sense, but simply more or less informed and/or sophisticated” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Constructions are malleable and so are the realities they are associated with.

Guba (1981) discusses that while the criteria for trustworthiness in scientific inquiry are internal validity (truth value), external validity (applicability or generalizability), reliability (consistency) and objectivity (neutrality), these four

categories have evolved for naturalistic inquiry into credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This alternative terminology better reflects the nature and distinction of qualitative research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Trustworthiness in qualitative research helps convey that the studies have significance and value (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and are believable, accurate, and plausible (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). This section discusses the implications of my own study and the strategies I employed to enhance trustworthiness.

Credibility

Credibility relates to the accurate representation of what research participants have conveyed and what they think, feel, and do (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Credibility entails establishing structural corroboration or coherence to produce findings that are plausible (Guba, 1981). I undertook several steps to enhance the credibility of this study.

I was reflexive of biases or assumptions that I brought to the study, to the site, and to the participants. I kept a reflective journal during this research study process. I noted my perspectives when discussing the findings, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations.

I was repeatedly engaged in the field over a prolonged period. This helped provide a deeper understanding of the site and participants. I noted my observations and analysis in my reflective journal with the aim of including additional insights into the study findings and analysis.

I proposed multiple data collection methods, which allows for triangulation and supported the corroboration of themes and descriptions from the leaders, direct reports, and clients. The analytical triangulation supported my interpretations and abstractions.

I did not hide or fail to disclose findings that were contrary to my expectations or assumptions. By presenting discrepancies, I emphasized my preference to convey my case studies as accurately as possible, even if it meant it is more difficult to form theoretical generalizations or extend transformational leadership theory. Without conducting credible and trustworthy research and being open to disclosing discrepant or challenging findings, any extension of transformational leadership theory I would make would be in doubt.

I asked colleagues to review my field notes and other study materials and to help me examine my assumptions and interpretations of the data.

Transferability

Quantitative research aims for statistical generalizability and findings to be applicable across all settings and contexts. In qualitative research, generalizations are impossible because all social or behavioral phenomena are context-bound, therefore statements of truth cannot have general applicability (Guba, 1981). Transferability refers to how findings from one setting can be useful in context-relevant settings. In other words, transferability is the ability of findings to be seen by the reader as similar in other settings and communities based on an in depth understanding of how the phenomena in question occur at the research site (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). I undertook several steps to enhance the transferability of this study.

The purposeful sampling that I followed was intended to uncover insights that are important and relevant to transformational leadership in professional services businesses.

I solicited rich, descriptive data to understand situational details and nuances. This helped to develop a context-relevant and holistic picture.

I developed detailed, context-relevant descriptions to communicate the study findings. This helps to convey the reality of my research participants, preserving the holistic picture by maintaining the complexities.

Dependability

Dependability, in the qualitative approach, relates to reliability in the quantitative approach and refers to tracking the ways one collects and interprets data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Dependability aims to produce findings that are stable despite instabilities that can arise from investigating different realities or because of shifts in ways of developing insights on the part of the investigator-as-instrument (Guba, 1981). I undertook several steps to enhance the dependability of this study.

Methodological triangulation, discussed in the section on credibility, helps with enhancing dependability. One of the methods used can help overcome limitations or weaknesses in other methods. Dependability is strengthened when multiple methods support findings.

I created an “audit trail,” which refers to detailed explanations of how data is collected and analyzed and is available for review by others (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). Others are able to help verify if my findings are supported by the data.

By asking two skilled colleagues to code one of my interviews in full, I assessed and established inter-rater reliability. This helps limit or highlight bias.

Confirmability

Confirmability relates to objectivity in quantitative, empirical research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). In qualitative research it relates to the degree of investigator predilections and bias in the results, with the aim of researchers to produce findings that are investigator-free, i.e. there is confirmability of data and interpretations (Guba, 1981). A study that has high confirmability has descriptions and analysis that epitomizes the research sample and site. I undertook several steps to enhance the confirmability of this study.

I practiced reflexivity and maintained an audit trail. I recorded my assumptions and decision-making process in a journal that can be audited. This journal helps to show how and why I formed analyses and conclusions.

Methodological triangulation, which I have discussed in the sections on transferability and dependability helps to test findings and interpretations that may arise from just one source or method.

If needed I could request a confirmability audit together with the dependability audit. Two skilled and knowledgeable colleagues helped assess the confirmability.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations inherent to qualitative research and specific to my study. Limitations are factors that restrict the scope or outcome of a study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). This section discusses several limitations and the means to address them.

The first limitation I will discuss is researcher bias. It is believed that inquiry cannot be value free because all inquiry occurs through theory windows, which are not value free. Values shape or create inquiry outcomes (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Postpositivist researchers aim for a stance of distanced disinterestedness in the participants of their study for the sake of objectivity, while critical theorists and constructivists aim for passionate participation with their participants. To manage the impact of bias I carry, I documented all known biases and assumptions. I described how my perceptions, expectations, and biases affect my analyses and conclusions.

My role as an employee of the site organization helped enable access to research participants and at the same time carried limitations. I knew several of the participants. Some of the participants may have felt a sense of coercion to participate or that somehow news of their participation may spread, which could elevate their profile and help them be seen as a good corporate citizen. Some of them may have not been as forthcoming in the interview, not knowing what I could do with the data, or they may have embellished, wanting to come across as more successful, and minimized their challenges and vulnerabilities. To help guard against negative impacts from these possibilities, at the start of each interview I reiterated that I will keep all information shared, including their

participation, confidential. Also, through my tone of voice, body language, and questions, I tried to establish a safe, relaxed, and trusting atmosphere during the interviews.

Restricted sample size is another limitation in this study. Although in quantitative research a large, representative sample helps with generalizability of findings, for my study, a larger sample means I can see and assess more patterns across participants. A larger scale study can be conducted in the future. Potentially additional researchers can work with me to share the workload for a larger scale exploration.

Limited interview time is another limitation. Interviews can surface many important perspectives, experiences, and meanings. With only one hour scheduled with the CEOs and 30 minutes with the direct reports, I may not have captured all the knowledge and nuances that were relevant to my study. Future research could consider longer interviews with participants. Also, further research could consider varying question types, or perhaps include critical incident reviews, to capture additional data that could be relevant to the research topic.

Using open questions and not influencing descriptions can also cause limitations in this study. My interview protocols consisted of open questions. I did not use pre-planned probes that may refer to specific aspects of the work of the participants, environmental factors, or learning activities. This enabled me to conduct the interview based on how they respond to the initial open questions and my probes were based on information they choose to share. This means that I may have missed out on potentially relevant information that participants neglected to share. For example, I might have missed out on learning about certain formal learning programs that the participants attended if they did not bring it up. To address this limitation, future research could

include a questionnaire to proactively capture aspects of transformational leadership behavior and the related supports, challenges, and developmental information.

Participant reactivity could limit the value of this study. Participants might have reacted to me and the interview process in a way that led to their responses being biased by concern of how they will be represented. To address this risk, conveyed to participants that their identities and that of their organization and clients will be kept confidential. I encouraged them to respond openly and honestly.

Limited voice of clients is another limitation of this study. This study aimed to understand transformational leadership of leaders of professional services businesses. To gain valuable perspective on how a leader in this environment is transformational with clients, a researcher may want to interview clients or conduct field observation on the work processes and engagements. Due to business sensitivities, for this research project I was unable to interview clients or conduct work observations. My understanding about the client perspectives came from what arose in interviews with participants and from the written responses in the client feedback surveys. I was unable to ask questions to clients to clarify their views. Further research could entail partnering with one or more client organizations to investigate this topic further, ideally encompassing interviews with clients and work observation.

An additional inherent risk of this research study is misidentification of participants as transformational leaders, i.e., if some of the CEOs identified as transformational were not actually transformational leaders. This would skew the findings and limit the usefulness of this research. To minimize the risk, I provided a definition and descriptions of transformational leadership to the C-level executives at the

site organization that nominated leaders for this study. I invited the CEOs that participated in my study to take the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1985), which generated a score of transformational leadership.

Another limitation of this study is having only one researcher code the interviews. The trustworthiness of the study could be enhanced by having multiple researchers code all the interview transcripts.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a methodology to study CEOs that have been identified as transformational leaders and that that lead professional services businesses to understand how they are transformational in complex and challenging work environments. It began with a rationale for a qualitative approach, which can enable us to accept multiple conceptions, understandings, and applications of transformational leadership and accept varied approaches in how it is developed. It is likely that this study will uncover several interpretive nuances about transformational leadership that have not been elicited or discussed in prior research.

I discussed selecting case study methodology for this research for several reasons. Case study research can be effective within a relativist perspective, capturing multiple realities, meanings, and constructions. Case study enables the generation of propositional and naturalistic generalizations. Case study research is effective at answering “how” questions, which are exploratory in nature. An exploratory case study method allows me to study multiple leaders and draw a set of cross-participant conclusions. This method also allows me a way to study rare leaders.

The site of this study is a large, global, professional services conglomerate organization that employs over 100,000 people. The sample for the study consisted of 10 CEOs across 10 different businesses within this professional services organization. Selection criteria for the study were described.

I discussed the contextual, perceptual, demographic, and theoretical information needed. The contextual data needed encompasses information on organizational structures, team structures and roles, organizational histories, products and services, business strategy, mission, values, work environments, operating procedures, and policies. The perceptual data needed includes how CEOs enact and develop transformational leadership and their perceptions of the factors that help and hinder their leadership. This was collected through in-depth interviews with the CEOs identified for the study. Secondary in-depth interviews were conducted with their direct reports. Written comments within client satisfaction data, which I reviewed, also elicited perceptions on transformational leadership. At the end of each interview I collected demographic information from the participants. This demographic information was used to help with cross-participant analysis and helped with understanding underlying factors in perceptions and experiences. Theoretical information from academic literature helped me understand the topics involved in my research, supported my methodology, and helped me analyze my findings. The literature review considers two major areas: transformational leadership and adult learning.

I then listed the steps within my research design and elaborated on the data collection methods. My two primary methods are interviews and document reviews. I conducted one-on-one interviews with 10 CEOs identified as transformational that lasted

approximately one hour. I also conducted one-on-one interviews with direct reports of these 10 CEOs, lasting approximately 30 minutes, up to two direct reports per CEO. These interviews were semi-structured. For this study I had access to the client satisfaction feedback survey data for the site organization. This encompasses quantitative and qualitative data for thousands of clients of the site organization. I focused my analysis on the qualitative data – collecting and analyzing comments that spoke to transformational and transactional leadership. I used this information to verify and corroborate accounts, perspectives, and themes from the interviews. I then discussed literature on the strengths and limitations of each data collection method.

This chapter then covered potential ethical issues and safeguards. All participation in this research was voluntary. I shared an informed consent form and information on participant's rights with my study participants. I took steps to ensure anonymity of my research participants, the organizations they work for, and their clients. I kept confidential any sensitive business information. I followed the guidelines of the Teachers College, Columbia University Internal Review Board and the social and behavioral research course of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. I was prepared to appropriately address any instance of potential harm that might have arisen in this study.

I then discussed trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To enhance credibility, I kept a reflective journal during this research study. My perspectives are noted in the dissertation sections on findings, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations. I was repeatedly engaged in the field over a prolonged period, which helped provide a deeper understanding of the site and participants. I proposed multiple data collection methods, which allow for

triangulation. I had two colleagues review my field notes and other study materials to help me to examine my assumptions and interpretations of the data.

To enhance transferability, I undertook purposeful sampling, intending to uncover insights were important and relevant to transformational leadership in professional services businesses. I solicited rich, descriptive data to understand situational details and nuances. This helped to develop a holistic and context-relevant picture. I developed detailed, context-relevant descriptions to communicate the study findings. This helped to convey the reality of my research participants, preserving the holistic picture by maintaining the complexities.

To enhance dependability, I engaged in methodological triangulation. I created an audit trail, which refers to detailed explanations of how data is collected and analyzed. By asking two skilled colleagues to code one of my interviews in full, I assessed and established inter-rater reliability.

To enhance confirmability, I practiced reflexivity and maintained an audit trail. I recorded my assumptions and decision-making process in a journal that can be audited. I requested a confirmability audit together with the dependability audit. Methodological triangulation helped me to test findings and interpretations that may arise from just one source or method.

Finally, I discussed limitations of the study and the remedies I recommend. The limitations discussed were research bias, my role in the site organization, restricted sample size, limited interview time, an open-ended approach, participant reactivity,

limited voice of clients, and misidentification of participants as transformational leaders.

Some suggestions for future research were proposed.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments.

It is hoped that the findings discussed in this chapter could support recommendations on how to develop and support leaders and high potentials in professional services firms.

The chapter begins with a summary of information about the study participants, including the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire findings for the 10 CEOs in the study. There were 10 CEOs and 18 team members interviewed in the study (up to two team members per CEO). The interviews were structured around these three research questions:

1. What actions do CEOs who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?
2. How do these CEOs describe how they learned to be transformational?

3. What factors do these CEOs perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

Each of the major findings of the study will be presented and discussed with quotes from the interviews with the CEOs and team members. The findings are further supported by client satisfaction survey data.

The major findings of this study are:

1. A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.
2. All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences.
3. A majority of participants (64%) indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work, while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work.

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Findings

I invited all 10 of the CEOs to take the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Avolio & Bass, 2004), also known as the MLQ 5X Short or the standard MLQ. It has 45 items. The MLQ is the most commonly used measurement for transformational leadership and which has been revised multiple times to improve its reliability and validity (Northouse, 2018). The mean transformational leadership score of CEOs in my study of 3.3/4, which is above the US norm of 2.85 (Avolio & Bass, 2004), supports the

view that the CEOs in my study, who are regarded as transformational by company executives, are indeed transformational leaders. However, because my sample of leaders is small, the score of 3.4/4 is not statistically significant. Table 4.1 below shows the sub-scores of the transformational leadership components (Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration), sub-scores of the transactional leadership components (Contingent Reward and Management-by-Exception: Active), and sub-scores of passive-avoidant leadership (Management-by-Exception: Passive and Laissez-Faire Leadership).

Table 4.1 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Findings

	Transformational Leadership					Transaction al Leadership	Passive- Avoidant		Outcomes of Leadership				
	Builds Trust (IIA)	Acts with Integrity (IIB)	Encourages Others (IM)	Encourages Innovative Thinking (IS)	Coaches & Develops People (IC)	Rewards Achievement (CR)	Monitors Deviations & Mistakes (MBEA)	Fights Fires (MBEP)	Avoids Involvement (LF)	Generates Extra Effort (EE)	Is Productive (EFF)	Generates Satisfaction (SAT)	Aggregate Five I's of Transformational Leadership
CEO 1	3.3	2.8	4.0	3.5	2.0	3.3	2.3	0.3	0.0	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.1
CEO 2	3.3	3.0	3.8	4.0	3.5	3.3	3.8	2.5	0.5	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5
CEO 3	2.8	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.3	3.3	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.7	3.8	3.0	3.4
CEO 4	3.3	4.0	4.0	3.3	3.8	3.0	1.5	1.0	0.8	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.7
CEO 5	2.8	2.5	3.3	3.0	2.8	3.0	1.0	0.5	0.0	2.7	3.3	3.0	2.9
CEO 6	3.7	2.3	3.8	2.7	3.5	3.0	0.8	0.5	0.0	3.5	4.0	3.0	3.2
CEO 7	2.8	3.5	3.8	2.8	3.5	2.5	0.0	0.3	0.0	3.3	3.3	3.0	3.3
CEO 8	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
CEO 9	3.0	3.5	3.8	2.5	3.0	2.3	2.0	0.5	0.5	3.0	2.8	3.0	3.2
CEO 10	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Average	3.12	3.20	3.81	3.10	3.18	2.96	1.42	0.70	0.35	3.23	3.47	3.0	3.29
Norm*	2.94	2.77	2.92	2.78	2.85	2.87	1.67	1.03	0.65	2.74	3.07	3.08	2.85
Differen ce	0.18	0.43	0.89	0.32	0.33	0.09	- 0.25	- 0.33	- 0.30	0.49	0.40	- 0.08	0.44

Scale: 0=Not at all, 1=Once in a while, 2=Sometimes, 3=Fairly often, 4=Frequently, if not always

*US Norm data (Avolio & Bass, 2004)

Finding 1

Finding 1: A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.

At interview, the CEOs were asked to describe the actions they take in leading their teams and clients. The direct reports (team members) of the CEOs were, similarly,

asked to describe actions that their managers take in working with their team members and clients. The responses were coded according to Bass and Avolio's framework of transformational leadership (1997). See Appendix K for the full table of results for Finding 1. See Appendix L for a summary chart of indicators of transformational leadership.

Table 4.2 Finding 1 Outline

<p>Finding 1</p> <p>A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.</p> <p>100% of the study participants described transformational leadership actions. The transformational leadership actions can be characterized into four categories:</p> <p>Idealized Influence (building trust and acting with integrity) (23 of 28, 82%)</p> <p>Individualized Consideration (coaching and advising people) (23 of 28, 82%)</p> <p>Inspirational Motivation (encourages others) (22 of 28, 79%)</p> <p>Intellectual Stimulation (encourages innovative thinking) (19 of 28, 68%)</p>

Idealized Influence

According to Bass and Avolio (1997), idealized influence consists of building trust and acting with integrity, which can entail acting as a role model to embody qualities desired in the team and high standards of conduct. Consistent with Bass and Avolio's description of idealized influence, there was a range of expression of among my interviewees. Below are descriptions and extracts from my interviews and the client

satisfaction data that are consistent with Bass and Avolio's description of idealized influence.

CEO 2 discussed being involved in every aspect during a period of business transformation because of his desire to ensure that his vision would be realized, to demonstrate accountability to others, and to build trust in their eyes:

Over that six months period, I was leading from the front. 100%. Every decision, every action, I was there, I was in the room doing it . . . That's because I had to ensure that the vision that I had was being communicated and being kept to . . . it was mine to deliver. I think that there was more trust and respect for a leader . . . when you are owning it, you are owning it. Also, I was accountable. I was very much, stood in front of everyone and went, "This is my plan. I'm delivering it, and if it fails, it's my fault."

Team Member 4B discussed that CEO 4 is seen as "absolutely iconic" by clients, even after just one meeting with them, and that having this kind of impression on people can transform perceptions:

Two or three of the most, super-most senior clients . . . when they were talking to me . . . one of them said that, "Oh, CEO 4 is, she's absolutely iconic." . . . The point is that guy has no reason to call somebody in the agency iconic, who he just met once, okay? So I think it's all about, how you are able to engage with the clients, who is such a senior level, and get that feedback, right? . . . I do think that is transformational because he remembers CEO 4, he remembers ProfCo [pseudonym for site organization], and then that's how the things happen, right? So I do think that is also a way to transform the perceptions.

CEO 5 discussed that being hands-on with the work and being transparent are ways that he builds trust and creates a nurturing environment that helps people feel safe to share their feelings:

I've been really big about - make sure to be personally hands on... I am massively transparent and probably an over sharer with my leadership team. I think that's built trust through the years . . . I've always found that by leading with trust, you really build trust . . . I think . . . to show fear, to show stress, to show when you don't know the answer . . . I just put it all out there . . . and I think it's created a great nurturing environment where nobody's afraid to show how they're feeling . . .

CEO 7 talked about how a personal, authentic connection is her key to the trust-building process with clients and comes ahead of the selling process:

It has to feel personal and human and that they feel like you're an authentic human being. And that they have to trust you enough to be able to feel like you can have the conversation with them and not necessarily them feeling like they're being sold to. It's like any relationship . . . You have to build up enough of a relationship so that they feel like they can trust you enough and seek your advice rather than "they're not listening to me, they just want to sell to me." But when it, when we do go to them with ideas, at the moment I would say not one client I've been to doesn't want to hear what we've got to offer across the world.

Team Member 7A discussed how CEO 7 is not conflict avoidant, does not let problems persist, and does not feel the need to placate people. Placating people, while the easier route, can lead to further problems down the road.

. . . she wasn't conflict avoidant . . . In [name of region] . . . coming out of a [review meeting] they found a bunch of [problems] and she just called the CEO up and she said, "You've got two months, clean your house up, that's it." And he said "Oh, but CEO 7, everybody does that here." and she's, "I don't care about everybody, you're not doing that on my watch, do you understand me, you're cleaning up? Okay, good." and hung up the phone . . . we placate a lot of people, which actually creates a lot more problems, because of fear of them leaving, or a fear of them impacting an account . . . she can have that direct conversation and keeping their relationship intact . . .

CEO 9 discussed how he demonstrates in a friendly way that it is ok to not know everything. This encourages others to chill out and ask questions about things that they don't know.

When you say, "It's okay to not know everything," and then when I demonstrate that I don't know vocally in a meeting, in a way that's friendly and not threatening, there's another moment with people chilling out. And then the bold ones in the room will start, they'll start to, it happens in almost every meeting. Somebody will then say, "I don't know. What is that?"

CEO 10 discussed gaining trust by consistent behavior, being authentic, and having moral integrity. He also discussed giving advice to another leader around being authentic.

I think leaders gain the support and the trust of the people that are with them by your consistent behavior; it doesn't up and change, it doesn't get all grumpy in times of stress, it's cool and it's calm and it's consistent. Most of all, it's authentic. I was once told, 20 or 30 years ago, "Don't try to be somebody else. Just be you." I gave the same advice to [ProfCo CEO] when he took over for [prior ProfCo CEO]. I said "Don't, whatever you do, try to emulate [prior ProfCo CEO] or be him, or do speeches in his style. It'll never work. You just have to be you, and the authentic you." ... I think moral integrity and that all is behind trust ...

The category of idealized influence was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client commented that their contact at the agency was a trusted partner to them, that she spent time to really understand the client's business, and is an asset to their team:

Our global contact, [name], has been an amazing asset to the team. She has taken the time to really understand the business and add value beyond just selling media. She is a trusted partner.

Another client commented that their client service manager goes out of her way to be supportive, is comfortable presenting to large audiences, and inspires a level of trust:

[Name], our client service manager is great. She is always quick to suggest a method or option that will answer the question I have. She is pragmatic in managing expectations, but you still get the sense that she is going out of her way to support and help with what you need. She's also super comfortable presenting in front of large audiences and I think that helps to inspire a level of trust with [agency name], which doesn't always come easily with some agencies.

Individualized Consideration

According to Bass and Avolio (1997), individualized consideration consists of listening carefully to individual needs, acting as coach or adviser, and treating others in unique and caring ways. There was a range of expression among the leaders and team

members interviewed. Below are descriptions and extracts from my interviews and the client satisfaction data that are consistent with Bass and Avolio's description of individualized consideration.

CEO 1 discussed building close and caring relationships with very senior clients and potential clients that enable them to feel comfortable confiding in him what they find inspiring, exciting, and bothersome:

My field of play now externally is very senior Chief Marketing Officers... And these are people that I see regularly enough and know regularly enough and I'm able to talk to them not as a sort of [gasp and gestured big] but as a peer. And they will confide in me what they find exciting, what they find inspiring, and also what really bothers them. All the way down to the, "When I talked to my CEO, I feel such lack of confidence about the following three things." So somehow, I've built relationships and continuously I'm building those relationships that people will confide with me.

CEO 2 commented about having empathy and understanding your audience: "I think one of the key things about leadership and regardless if it's client, team, company, whatever is having the empathy and ability to understand your audience in the room."

Team Member 2A discussed how her manager, CEO 2, cares about people as individuals: "He makes you feel like you're working with a complete human being that cares about people as much as the business."

Team Member 5A discussed how her manager is attentive to creating moments of personal connection with clients, particularly during breaks between meetings, and encourages that his team plan for those moments too:

What he's so good at are moments, creating moments with people... he understands in any kind of a meeting or opportunity of meeting with somebody, how the little things make a difference . . . It is never lost on CEO 5 how important these breaks are in between meetings . . . and the moments of connectivity with people. How important the note that goes out right before the meeting saying, "hey I just really can't wait to see you. I'm really looking forward to talking about this." . . . and having a few honest minutes of conversation in

between a break. And making sure that we're planning for that. So that we have that time for whatever to happen.

Team Member 5B shared that CEO 5 gave almost the same amount of emphasis to an intern as he gave to a reporter from the Financial Times about a big story:

He's telling [his assistant], "Oh my God. Set up this interview with this young woman in Seattle."... And he almost gave the exact same amount of emphasis on this Financial Times reporter who, that's a big deal (laughs)... He's like, "Can you send me her information?" So he's gonna prep for it so that he can really have nice kind of, a worthwhile conversation with this young lady. Eventually she's gonna work for us, of course. She's gonna wanna work for us.

CEO 6 described that she took on a relationship with a client that was feared by her own team and that the CEO was able to develop a mentoring relationship with that client, giving her feedback that she said "shocked" her:

So I told her that, "I'm gonna be the executive sponsor on the business. Please give me a chance. I just took over." Blah blah blah . . . now I'm her mentor. And I tell her the truth. So her people feared her. Her own people, not even talking about on the agency side. Her people feared her. And they threw the agency under the bus because, even when it was their idea, because they were so afraid of her. I gave her that feedback. She was shocked and it was, it was legit.

Team Member 6B discussed how CEO 6 is committed to developing leaders around her and described how CEO 6 wanted him to present at a board meeting in order for the board to know who he is and to help him build his career:

She is . . . incredibly loyal and committed to building and developing leaders around her. What I mean by that is so in my case . . . CEO 6 is very intentional in some of the places where she wants me to . . . present on a team that's presenting to the ProfCo board directors . . . In her view, supporting me means making sure I have the right visibility to the leadership at ProfCo as I've tried to succeed at [agency name] but also build a career within the group . . .

CEO 8 discussed that there are times when her colleagues are not seeing eye to eye, so she meets with them, is oriented to their needs, and wants them to understand that she will support them, which engages them to do more:

. . . there's points where they were not seeing eye to eye. So . . . I can come into the middle of that. Say "what's going on, what's happening, what do you think, where are you with something?" . . . So I had to go do quite a few face to face meetings on that where I had to play very low (laughs) to that person needed to be very high and feel that were in control. Even though they weren't . . . I think it's also about . . . having a good level of that calibration so it's not about my, me. It's about what they need . . . about them understanding that if something goes wrong that I will help them . . . then when they know they have that support then, then they'll go forward and do more.

Team Member 8A described the style of CEO 8 as coaching. She was more focused on the local team than on herself and she was an enabler of the team.

So for her, what the reason I say coaching is to say that, in the end I think one of the best qualities about CEO 8 was that she was clear that it was not about her. It was about the local team, and the power of the local team. So I think the reason I used the word coaching is I think she was an enabler of letting the team perform.

Team Member 8B discussed how his manager can understand their clients deeply, including their motivations, business needs, and head space. He went on to say that she spends a lot of time with clients, which shows dedication.

. . . on the key decision-maker clients really understanding, I think, their personal motivations, and getting to know them very, very deeply actually... her client-centricity, not only from an overall standpoint of the business, and what the business needs are, but then also just understanding the individuals that we're working with, and really what, where they are in terms of their head space . . . she spends a lot of time with them, and she's available to them pretty much 24/7 . . . which is amazing dedication and I think more reality today than ever in terms of the 24/7 connected worlds that we live in.

CEO 9 described how he likes to connect with others to understand their inner voice, desires, fears, frustrations, and biases:

I try to connect with the person I'm talking to, whether it's an employee, whatever audience I'm talking to: client, prospect, employee, potential employee, partner. Ultimately, you wanna know what their inner voice is saying to themselves. You wanna know what their desires and fears and frustrations are, biases are, and I think as soon as you can draw that out, the better.

Team Member 9B discussed that CEO 9 aims to establish one on one relationships with clients, do activities together, get to know clients very well, and make them feel comfortable:

He plays to his strengths and he focuses on establishing one on one relationships. So that might be going with a client to a football game, having a client go heli-skiing with him, and it's not just social. It's very intense but he would rather . . . I get the sense with CEO 9 he'd rather spend the full day with a client, really getting to know them, maybe bring up the agency at various points but . . . First and foremost, making them feel comfortable.

Team Member 6B described his manager as a hands-on mentor and coach to many people in the business and that she helps him to learn from her experiences:

So CEO 6 is a mentor to many . . . her mentoring style is very hands on and pragmatic. So she really works through issues with her team. So . . . she will step in there in that role and really be a mentor and a coach and just allow me to learn from her experiences and she'll sort of challenge me and put me out front, in a way that's respectful of my experience but also pushes me a bit and lets me sort of grow and develop in that particular area. And I've seen her do that not just to me but other leaders in the business.

The category of individualized consideration was also cited in the client satisfaction survey data where one client described that their agency contact person listens well, has patience, and is considerate of their situation: "Competence, ability to really listen to us, patience and consideration of our situation. Realizes the driving of our project for real. Flexibility."

Inspirational Motivation

According to Bass and Avolio (1997), inspirational motivation entails encouraging others, communicating high expectations, inspiring others through motivation to become committed to the shared vision, and using symbols and emotional appeals to achieve more than people would in their own self-interest. Consistent with

Bass and Avolio's definition of inspirational motivation, there were a range of expressions among the people I interviewed. Below are descriptions and extracts from my interviews and the client satisfaction data that are consistent with Bass and Avolio's description of inspirational motivation.

Team Member 1A discussed that CEO 1 brings a clarity of vision and paints compelling pictures of the future, which helps others understand what they need to do:

I think it takes, and I think that's what CEO 1 brings, it takes a clarity of vision and the conviction and confidence to say what you feel that people need to hear and not what they want to hear. And the clearer the picture is that you can paint of the vision that you have or that the leader has in this case, CEO 1, and he is very good at painting very compelling pictures of what the future could look like where people say hey, okay I understand . . . what I need to do.

Team Member 1B discussed how CEO 1 conveys vision, which makes people want to go with him. He also is full of conviction, uses rhetoric, shares anecdotes, and builds credibility.

So, you see the vision . . . invariably that makes people all want to go with him, because he's got the destination . . . and he talks in a way that is just kind of full of conviction . . . using rhetoric or words like "it is the definitive," . . . and as I said before, he kind of fluidly, would tell these, sprinkle in these anecdotes of what leaders in marketing are doing, which gives credibility what he's talking about.

CEO 2 discussed that it is helpful "having some charisma, personality and stature, so you can persuade people, so they listen to you."

Team Member 2A discussed how CEO 2 can take people on a journey that they feel they have created and that helps them to feel they are privy to the end answer and the way of getting there:

. . . he tends to know where he wants to get to but will not be explicit at the outset with many people as to why that is. So he, and I guess the key thing there being, he'll take the group of people through a journey and make it feel like it's a journey that they've created. Even though in the back of his mind he knew exactly

where he wanted to get to in the first place, which I think is a massive skill, particularly in larger kind of organizations where you've got to, where people have got to feel like they're all privy to not only the end answer but getting there.

CEO 4 discussed that when sharing interesting pieces of previous work with clients ("gossiping success" and "merchandising good work widely"), those clients would express that they want to do similar work. She shared that gossiping success is a way to drive transformation because it gets people on board and makes people feel like they can do similar work.

. . . every time we managed to find one maverick client that would do the really interesting piece of work with us . . . I would merchandise the heck out of it with other clients . . . they'd say, "Wow, that's awesome." You know, "I wanna do stuff like that." . . . so gossiping success, merchandising good work widely is a way to drive transformation, I'm sure. Because it gets more people on board who want to do it and it makes people feel like they are able to do it because somebody else has done it.

Team Member 4A describes that his manager, CEO 4, had the ability to help people in the organization not feel overwhelmed and to help them think that what might seem impossible was very possible:

. . . one of the biggest things that she and I did together, along with the help of others was . . . pitch for the global consolidation of [client organization name]'s consumer health [business] and it was a massive undertaking . . . this is a monster of an RFP (request for proposal) . . . I think a lot of other people would get almost overwhelmed by just the enormity of what was in front of them. But she has a really great ability to be pragmatic, decisive, action-oriented, and just make what might seem, I mean I didn't feel like this but I could see others, what might seem impossible to be very possible.

CEO 5 discussed that he brings together the positive things happening in his organization into a narrative so that people can see the impact, because some people don't see it fully. Through telling people about the summation of all the good in the organization, he wants people to keep building on it.

... it's my job as leader to take all of those various positives and put them together into a narrative so that people can see the impact ... Very few people have the purview of all those things ... I ... say, "The sum of all those positives is something even more positive, and let's keep building on that and let's repeat that." But you have to expose people to the summation of all the good, because some people don't see it altogether.

Team Member 5B describes that the impact of CEO 5's preference to speak face-to-face with people helps people feel important, accountable, obligated, good about their involvement, and responsible:

It makes people feel important. It makes you feel like you're a legitimate stakeholder in the process. It also inherently conveys a sense of accountability that if you said something face-to-face with somebody ... you're gonna feel more obligated to make sure it really happens and comes true. So I think it's good for him to gauge input on a personal level, human level. And it also makes people feel good about their involvement, but also makes them feel accountable, which is a great sense of responsibility.

In discussing her manager, CEO 6, Team Member 6A's description conveys that inspirational motivation could also come from a place of vulnerability:

I was so taken with her spirit, her confidence, her vulnerability in terms of being able to say, "This is what I've always wanted, but I can't do this ... all of this is what makes sense to me and I know that we think the same. But I ..." and she said this to me multiple times since I've come into this business, "I can't do this without you." Which to come from the CEO ... I think it's a beautiful and vulnerable thing for someone in that position to be able to say is, "I need you" and to say it with that CEO 6 ferocity ...

Team Member 8A discussed that CEO 8 focused on the health and energy of the team with a view to motivate them and help them feel better. This focus on health was part of a deliberate approach she was taking in her own life. Team Member 8A described that this approach was inspiring and that the team was in better condition because of it.

... she had a strong focus on our energy levels, our health ... it was a very conscious and deliberate approach she was taking too ... it's reflective of her intelligence as a human being to understand how to motivate a group ... it all made us feel better ... We were in better condition ... it's also very inspiring for

people, I think, to see a leader act like that rather than a leader who . . . whips everybody into working until 3:00 AM . . .

Team Member 8B shared about how his manager, CEO 8, motivated him to be fearless, to step outside his comfort zone, and to push forward:

And her thing was always be fearless . . . am I gonna pull back and just maybe stay a little safe in my comfort zone? Or . . . push forward? And I just did that this week here, as a matter of fact. I pushed forward. I was a little hesitant to send this note out, but I said, you know what? Be fearless.

According to Team Member 4A, CEO 4 demands that her teams are highly functioning. She also helped him feel greater than the sum of parts, empowered and excited to deliver, loyal to the company, energized, and feel that there was intangible spirit in the team:

She demands a high quality out of her teams. She demands that her teams be high functioning, highly functioning, and as a type A, rather type A personality, I fed right into that . . . I would imagine other people feel the same thing. You feel truly greater than the sum of parts. You feel empowered to deliver. You are excited to deliver. There is a little bit of desire to have that kind of recognition . . . it makes you feel part of something bigger than you and that's great. And I do think that in turn it also develops a greater sense of loyalty to the company . . . it's positively energizing . . . you have both tangible action but intangible spirit.

The category of inspirational motivation was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that the team they work with is motivated and passionate, which shines through at each interaction:

The team is extremely capable, motivated and passionate, which shines through in each interaction. The people who are working on the team now are great and very motivated, which is something I am grateful for.

Intellectual Stimulation

According to Bass and Avolio (1997), intellectual stimulation entails encouraging innovative and creative thinking and helping people challenge their beliefs and values.

Leaders that engage in intellectual stimulation support others to try new approaches, encourage problem solving, and increase awareness of problems. Within my sample there were a range of manifestations and descriptions of intellectual stimulation. Below are descriptions and extracts from my interviews and the client satisfaction data that are consistent with Bass and Avolio's description of intellectual stimulation.

Team Member 1A described how he and CEO 1 have "sparing" matches aimed at reaching better ideas and outcomes, which provides a sense of freedom:

So it's always about getting to a better idea and a better outcome. So if something that he says, or I say, that's nonsense, the other will call that out right away, but never, but in full understanding that we're not judging the other person. We're just judging whatever was said, the idea at the table. And that gives a lot of freedom . . . Sparring, as we call it. We're constantly sparring, like boxers do sparring.

CEO 1 has a point of view that senior clients (e.g., Chief Marketing Officers) are lonely at the top and are short of people that tell them things straight. He has interesting and important things to say to them or has questions that get them to think.

Because my insight is that [senior clients] are lonely at the top . . . they're short of people that tell them straight . . . I usually have something interesting to say or my questions will be guided by something that someone else says and I know that that was important to them, I don't know, finding a solution to something. So my questions will get them to think.

Team Member 2A describes how her manager, CEO 2, seeks diverse perspectives to challenge the team, with a view to keep the team from becoming "too comfortable":

He actively seeks either people who will bring a different perspective or indeed now that the team is a little bit more mature, we're almost looking for people who are going to be a little bit disruptive so that we don't get too comfortable.

CEO 4 discussed her practice of surprising the client through bringing them information or an example that they don't expect. She explained that this helps the client to understand the work of the agency better and opens up different types of conversation:

. . . I try to surprise them very often in terms of either bringing them a piece of information they didn't know about or just as an example . . . every month I would start the meeting with procurement by showing them amazing creative work that we did . . . they were so excited about it and they could really understand what we were trying to do . . . Do something that is not expected because it will be well received. It will just open things up and open up a different type of conversation.

Team Member 6A and Team Member 6B both talk about how CEO 6 challenges.

Team Member 6A discussed how the ideas that are challenged end up as “stronger” and “sharper”:

There are definitely times when she'll challenge something that doesn't make sense to her and make it better in so doing . . . she is very happy to get in the mud and challenge ideas and interrogate them and always, based on my experience of 10 months, the ideas come out stronger and sharper on the other side. And, I've absolutely experienced that from my perspective. It has never, to me, felt intrusive or disruptive to my workflow

Team Member 6B discussed how CEO 6 pushes people outside comfort zones, is direct and precise in what she says, and has strong views:

CEO 6 will push people to be incredibly uncomfortable and she's incredibly direct and she's very precise in what she says and she has very strong views of sort of right and wrong. And she has very strong views of the business, so she does not suffer fools so easily either. So I would say that to work with CEO 6 is to be fairly exposed at times . . . it's to be pushed sort of continuously outside of a comfort zone . . .

Team Member 9A discussed how CEO 9 makes it acceptable for colleagues to try new things and not always be right:

. . . he's not afraid to put something out there and say, “You know, I think this,” or, “I think this is gonna happen. What do the rest of you think? And I'll go on record saying I think this is gonna happen and have no problem on it when I'm wrong and someone else is right.” So the way that manifests is he makes it okay to be wrong. He makes it okay to try something and fail.

Team Member 9B discussed how CEO 9 arranged for a meeting with clients and people in the company that, while seeming like a party, provided insights sharing:

It was not just a team building exercise, but it was actually significant insight share from clients. But the collision of creativity, business, team building, the global nature of it, it just made for something that people in the company I don't think would ever forget. And that's the kind of thing that CEO 9 will go the extra mile to do . . . And at the time it can just seem like he's throwing a party, but it couldn't be further from the truth. And sometimes people . . . just think it's another off-site but then six months later they may remember something that was said in an environment like that, that helps drive this point home.

Team Member 1A described that strong clients who engage with CEO 1 are typically able to “face the brutal facts” that will help them to come out stronger in their business, while some of their clients are aiming to buy confidence by working with CEO 1. The confident clients are able to challenge the way they interact with their audiences with the help of CEO 1.

[Clients] are basically strong people that are willing to face the brutal facts and have enough self-confidence that if they face the brutal facts, and they get his support, that they will come out stronger. Sometimes it's very insecure clients who buy between, let's say, quotation marks confidence. Because if you're strong in your opinion and challenging the way you interact then either it takes very strong client who says, “well, but in the end, this will make me better” or, it's in fewer applications, it's an insecure client who basically buys confidence. If CEO 1 is so sure of this then probably it's true.

The category of intellectual stimulation was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client noted that the team he/she worked with assessed core work from the lenses of the end consumer, internal audience, stakeholders, or channel, which helped to push and challenge current ways of working, assessment, and implementation:

[Agency name] team has performed and contributed fantastically this year. Their main strength is in assessing the core work from the customer's lens whether end consumer, internal audience, stakeholders or channel. This has helped in really pushing and challenging the current ways of working, assessment and implementation.

Another client shared that a couple of people from the agency are strategic partners that provide quality insights that are useful to inspire new thinking:

Very strong and responsible client service team. [Name] and [name] are both very proactive and keen to serve as [client organization name] strategic partner, and they are able to provide quality insights which are quite useful to inspire new thinking.

Finding 2

Finding 2: All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences.

At interview, the 10 CEOs were asked to describe how they learned to be the leaders they are today. A range of approaches were shared. For a full listing of the approaches and the frequency of occurrence, please refer to Appendix M for the distribution chart for Finding 2.

Table 4.3 Finding 2 Outline

<p>Finding 2</p> <p>All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences. Participants reported:</p> <p>Learning from experience (10 of 10, 100%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drawing on past experiences - Reflecting on past experiences <p>Dialogue with others (9 of 10, 90%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogue with colleagues - Dialogue with leaders, mentors - Dialogue with coaches <p>Observation (8 of 10, 80%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing other leaders - Observing events <p>Reading (5 of 10, 50%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Books, articles <p>Trial and error (4 of 10, 40%)</p> <p>Formal programs (3 of 10, 30%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conferences, seminars, or training programs
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Learning from experience

Drawing on past experiences. CEO 2 talked about an activity he has done many times in his career: making a pitch presentation to a client to win the ability to work on a new business assignment for them. He discussed:

I've been pitching for years and years and years. One of the things I know to say to people who are in a pitch, is watch the people's faces... Be prepared, of course, but actually read the room... I've been into pitches, where I started presenting stuff and I have looked at their faces and I've gone, "you're not with me, are you, room?" "You're not getting this," or "you don't like it, let's just move on. Let's just move on."

CEO 6 discussed that it is likely due to her own life experience that she treats younger people with the respect and care that they deserve:

But no one taught me that... that I know of. Maybe I absorbed it somewhere or maybe because I'm so in tune to it because of my life that I make sure that I treat younger people with the respect that they deserve and care that they deserve.

CEO 7 talked about how one of the pivotal moments in her career was the time she took on the role of the head of the UK office of a global agency and was asked to turn the business around. She said:

[That role] gave me the strength and experience, and therefore the confidence of being able to know that I could do that again. I could take a business that was failing, and make it good. And until I'd done that, I wouldn't have been able to say confidently I could've done it. I absolutely prior to that had been able to build business... I knew I was good as a CEO and I felt confident in my ability to run a successful agency... that experience has given me confidence to know that I can do that again, or that I can take [the global agency she now leads] even though it's a different scale, a different size, and know that I can do it again, even though it's not easy. It's super hard but I know I can do it.

CEO 8 discussed about how she learned from experience of adversity in her life. Some years ago her spouse passed away. She shared how her thoughts about work changed:

. . . when that happened, I just, I went, okay well that's the worst thing that's ever gonna happen to me, so now I'm just gonna (laughs), I'm just gonna go out and just make things happen and not worry about things. And not come at work at a place of fear . . . it just changed me. So it just transformed the way I think when that happened . . . everything changes and everything opens up . . . it made my job much more enjoyable because I was, I took myself out of it in a way, if you can imagine that. Like I was just, was no longer about me. . .

CEO 9 shared about his experience as an entrepreneur and the lessons he learned about building rapport, respect, and drawing on others:

So I started my first company when I was 21, and back, that was when the Internet started, in 1994, and I was the youngest person in the company and I started my second company when I was 27, and I was still, one of the youngest people. When you're the youngest and in power, it's tricky, right? 'Cause you've

got to build rapport and respect with others and can't be a command in control, and inherently, you just know less. So, I learned very quickly, when I asked questions of others, then I don't have to be the one standing there espousing all my wisdom, about things that I don't even know what I'm talking about.

Reflecting on past experiences. CEO 1 also discussed how he came up with his preferred pattern of working and his preference for embarking on new projects or roles after a certain period of time:

Trial and error. Having done it less frequently and burning out and just saying, "What the fuck's wrong with me? Why am I not interested in my kids anymore?" Or, "Why am I not excited about getting out of bed?" And I've now found that the time is roughly a year and a half for me.

CEO 2 described that he is very self-aware, self-reflective, and that although he speaks with an executive coach, he does all the reflection and processing on his past experiences:

I am quite self-aware and self-correcting. So I have a coach. I have you know, an exec coach here, and she just finds our sessions really funny because I can talk for half an hour. I will tell her where the, what I've done wrong, and I will tell her exactly how I fix them, and it's just, I seem to have this ability to go, in my own head, to go, "that's wrong and I'm gonna self-correct before I, before anyone else needs to self-correct me" if you like.

CEO 5 discussed his reflections on not regressing into habits of his prior account management roles in his career and the goal of finding the new value of what he brings into a client's situation as the CEO of the business:

I came up from account management . . . I've been really pressing myself on is to make sure I don't go back into my account management habits . . . I think for a long time, I probably relied on account management skills and realized that, while I was good at that, you're sort of blocking somebody else's role when you're trying to do that as the CEO, and so I think, as CEO, that it's really important that we find the new value of what we bring to a client's situation and don't try to be the account director. But it's an easy trap to fall into, because that's where my background, and a lot of the CEOs' backgrounds, comes from.

CEO 8 reflects from time to time on her experience as a competitive rower. She likes to use sports analogies and thinks about the business in terms of her experience rowing.

. . . [Rowing] really is all about team work and boats move quickly when the eight people on the boat move as one person. So that's kind of also how I think about this stuff. Lots of sports analogies . . . what you learn to do in rowing is become completely unconcerned with trying to get the other person to do what you think. You focus on yourself. And you focus on supporting what they need in order to do, to focus on themselves. And then when you do that everything moves. 'Cause it's about moving boat with speed, it's not about just what you're doing, where you're sitting. And that, that to me is also about what we're doing. I think having a competitive spirit and getting the great joy that you get when you win together. And that's much more fun than winning alone.

CEO 5 discussed that he is reflective on his work and that he utilizes that reflection to ensure he is focusing on doing work that adds value and uniquely make an impact:

. . . being more reflective on things that worked or didn't work, and being a little more in my own head, working to repeat behavior that worked and to amplify things that were good to take stock of every day and look at how you, where you had value and where you were just additive . . . and when you see that over time, you can start, then, filling your day more and more with the situations that you uniquely can make an impact . . . it's easy to fill a day, but it's not easy to fill a day with a string of events where you actually had full, unique impact. And so I try to optimize my days.

Dialogue with others

Dialogue with colleagues is most predominant finding within this category, followed by dialogue with leaders/mentors, and lastly dialogue with coaches.

Dialogue with colleagues. CEO 3 described how he is oriented to collaboration, to solving problems with other people, and that he doesn't have the full answer. He described having humility to get perspectives from others and that mistakes he has made have been when he has taken only his own counsel.

I have a pretty big orientation toward collaboration, working together. I prefer to solve problems with other people versus solving them on my own even though I always have strong ideas. I try to be humble enough to know that I don't have all the answers and most of the answers . . . And so having enough humility to say, an openness to get plenty of perspectives and thoughts and insights into a problem. And most of the mistakes that I make, are mistakes where I act too quickly and only by taking my own counsel.

CEO 4 shared how she likes to talk to a variety of people with different skill sets about different areas of the business to learn from them:

Talking to people is another one. Talking to very different people with different skills and trying to learn from them, which I actually love. I love talking to the media guys for example. And I think that I can now have decent conversations about lots of different areas of the business, which are not my core of the things that I grew up with because of that.

CEO 6 seeks feedback from colleagues. She views her colleagues on the internal board of the organization as her trusted advisors and leverages them for feedback and their perspectives.

So my people aren't afraid to give me feedback either. I think they're careful about it, but the ones, my trusted advisors are my, the internal board. I tell them, I give them direct feedback and I want it right back. So, and sometimes I have to say, "What did you think of that meeting?" . . . I knew at one point in a recent board meeting that I was kind of pi- it seemed like I was kind of picking on someone, so the board meeting ended . . . and I had a conversation with Team Member 6B and I said, "There was a point when I was saying this. Are you pissed at me?" And he said, "Well, CEO 6, I can't ever be pissed at you, but you did fuckin' annoy me."

CEO 7 asks colleagues that attend conferences or other types of events to share their learnings with the agency, which she feels can be inspiring for her and for others:

When we send people to be inspired at, I don't know conferences or whatever it may be, we always ask people to come back and present back to the agency. Because that's inspiring. You can get inspired.

CEO 8 discussed how through informal workshop-type meetings, she and her colleagues discussed various formal and informal feedback they had been receiving, which entailed whiteboarding and arguing:

So how we got to that with them really was, I'd say kind of a series of kind of workshopping types of meetings. Where it's very, very informal... Whiteboarding, figuring stuff out, arguing over what was right . . . So we were getting a lot of feedback from people. So it's taking the formal and informal feedback . . . each of those leaders, including me, at the center in Global, were getting different bits of feedback on how we were doing, how the other guys were doing, and all that kind of stuff. So there was a lot of informal, gathering over that kind of stuff.

CEO 6 seeks input from her trusted advisors in the organization to help make key decisions:

So I've been very careful and it helped me develop a skill where I'm still quick to make a decision, but I might take an extra day and I'll know what questions to ask and get all the perspectives. So I don't really make any key decisions now without at least two or three of my key people and sometimes the entire board that I have, which is about 10 people.

CEO 7 discussed her desire to hire different kinds of people with different ways of working and shared that this can benefit the business:

I try to be inspired and look outside [for new people]... One of the interesting things from a previous agency that I worked at, which was in a way their failure in the end, is that . . . they couldn't bring new people in and they couldn't take feedback that wasn't created themselves . . . So someone came with a new, I don't know, example being a new process or a new way of working. They would dismiss it, because they hadn't created it. Whereas I think bringing in different talent with different ways of working is brilliant. Because that's gonna feed us and our business.

CEO 10 described that it is a sign of strength to reach out to others for help when you don't know the answers:

I think good leaders, confident leaders, reach out for help when they need it, and are confident enough to say, "You know, I don't know the answer to that, and I think we owe it to our client to get the very best practitioner there is, and I'm going to not feel it's a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength to reach out to experts for

help,” in all the crises or problems or whatever ... What I learned is you don’t bottle up stuff, you reach out and find a trusted colleague, and have a conversation with them.

Dialogue with leaders, mentors. CEO 4 described how she learned through a relationship with her first boss, who was like a teacher and mentor to her. That boss also allowed CEO 4 to bring her own thinking to the table.

I can tell you my first boss . . . she had a profound effect on my, on the type of leader that I’ve become. I came to her when I was a junior account exec (entry level job) with my first job . . . She taught me, and at the same time, allowed me to have so much room to bring my own thinking to the table . . . She really cared about the business and so this combination of feeling like she was my teacher and mentor and at the same time she so believed in me, honestly, that it was, it gave me an incredible sense of freedom and responsibility even though I was so young and fresh into this career.

CEO 6 shared about how she learned through dialogue with one of her bosses. This boss would sit down with CEO6 and discuss what she thought CEO 6 should understand, including the activities of the company (“we do this”) and the numbers of the business (i.e., financials).

I could tell you the one boss who taught me the most about running a business, [name], taught me a- taught me so much about how to run a business and I started loving the business end of the business because of her . . . She literally sat down with me and said, “You have to understand...” . . . She would literally come down and say, “You need to understand that we pay rent here and we do this and look at these numbers, CEO 6. Do you understand these numbers?”

CEO 9 shared that he can develop a “mentor in the moment” by asking for advice and listening. He discussed about a recent interaction with a CEO of a US-based sporting team, who is a current client:

. . . I said, “[Name], I just like being around you.” . . . And he goes, “Why?” . . . And I go, “Cause you’re happy, you’re positive, and you’re aspirational and fearless.” And he goes, “Goddamn right I am.” He said, “Happiness is, and positivity is a leadership skill.” And I said, “Tell me more about that.” Right? So, I immediately turned it into asking for advice, asking the question, listening,

making him my mentor in the moment . . . and I've really been struck by that insight from him around positivity . . .

Dialogue with coaches. Only three of the 10 CEOs in the study mentioned working with executive coaches. CEO 2 worked with a coach and described that the coach helped him to navigate stakeholders and be ready for his new role, which entailed a different leadership style:

. . . I worked with him for about three years and it was really useful because particularly as I had started at [agency] . . . he really helped me work out how to navigate my stakeholders and really actually coach me into the next role I had at [agency] . . . it's such a different leadership style. It's going from hard power to soft power, so I had to demonstrate I could do that but also because it was such a huge matrix organization, I think in the end, he did a map, he helped me do a matrix map, stakeholder map.

CEO 3 shared that through guidance and stewardship from his coach, he worked on many aspects of his own leadership, including mindset, the way he led himself, and understanding his impact on others:

. . . he took me to school in terms of my own leadership. So really, 90% of what I learned, about how to pivot everything from my mindset, the way I led myself, really understanding my impact on others, not just what I was saying, but how they were receiving it. All of these, all of this learning, 90% of it happened under pretty specific guidance and stewardship from an expert.

CEO 6 did not have a coach previously in her career, though in the last 10 months, relies on a colleague that is a certified coach: "[name of colleague] is . . . I've never had a coach in my life. She's a great coach. She coaches a few people here and I use her a little bit as a coach."

Observation

Observing other leaders. CEO 2 described what he realized from attending a dinner event where a CEO of a large company was the keynote speaker:

... he was talking about leadership and he said, the thing with leadership is everyone thinks that the decisions you have to make on a daily basis are binary, they're like a yes or a no. So, he said, a hundred people ask him questions every day and then they want the answer there and then, don't understand why he doesn't act on them because they all think that it's a yes or a no, because they only see the one thing. He said, from becoming a CEO to big leader, every decision, all of those things are all grey. They are all a part of a massive jigsaw puzzle, none if it is straight forward. When he said that, I was like, "oh my God, that's so right." It's so true.

CEO 4 described that there are many learnings from many leaders that she has admired that she has incorporated:

... seeing the leaders that you admire, and learning bits and pieces from those leaders and then at some point it's wise to crystallize things into some habits or ways of working or whatever. I can't say that there's a person that I'm like, but I can tell you that there are many learnings from many people in the person that I am. If that makes sense.

CEO 5 has recognized leaders that are focused on self-promotion and are insecure. He has tried to model his leadership approach on leaders that have been appreciative and humble:

... it's usually the people who are working so hard to be the leader that do the things that are the least leader like. And (laughs) so, I think, on that side of the ledger, you can tell people who have self-promotion and who have, high insecurity, who are really worried about the optics of their brand, and the people who then are more leading by example, and letting leadership come. The people who, I think, one of the biggest points of difference in leadership I've noticed on what I like and don't like, personally, is appreciative leaders and humble leaders are the people that I have tried to follow and tried to model into my leadership ...

CEO 7 discussed that one of her prior bosses was kind and she has tried to bring kindness into the leader that she is now:

... when someone is kind to me, I remember that. It doesn't matter how senior you are, if somebody is kind to you, you remember that. One of my bosses, he was the CEO actually at the time. I mean I didn't directly report into him. But he was a kind human being, and he took his time. He gave you time. But he was kind and you remember that. And so that was definitely something that I took with me to try to embrace as the, as a leader that I am now. You know, because that kindness is cost you nothing, but it means everything.

CEO 8 discussed that through working for the ProfCo CEO, she learned how to focus more on what matters in the business:

... what I learned number one from him, is he had an incredible efficiency around looking at a situation or a problem or thing and seeing what mattered and what did not. When I worked with him I went, this is how these guys really operate at that level. They, they, their brains, like computers, go through: matters, matters, does not matter, matters, does not matter, matters. And they only attend to and put all of that brain power on what matters. They ignore the rest. And so I learned to do that with him.

CEO 4 discussed that she learned a way of presenting from observing a CEO that she worked for:

Another example is when I was at [agency name] in [country]. The CEO was a man named [name], a very well-known established guru, in a sense, in the market. He was known to everybody. He was sort of the marketing sort of god I suppose (laughs) in [country]. I learned a huge lot from him. The way he presented. I really remember picking up from him how he would bring storytelling to the presentation. He was very forward thinking and just the way that he presented was a learning for me and I picked up bits of that.

CEO 10 shared that in the prior organization he worked at, they had high standards of leadership and he learned from role models at that organization. Also, he shared that over his life, he has “cherry-picked” bits of other people that he really liked and rejected aspects that he didn’t want to be like:

... I think they have very, very high standards of leadership, and a lot of the things I’m talking about in this conversation, undoubtedly, I’ve learned from role models in [prior organization name] ... I wouldn’t say that I just looked at leaders and said “Well, I want to be like that.” I pick things that appeal to me ... when I look back over my life, there’s probably been 20 or 30 people that I have cherry-picked the bits that I’ve really liked, and rejected the things that I didn’t want to be like.

Observing events. CEO 2 discussed about a cross-business team that is “in absolute disarray” and described that there is confusion on the team and that the whole

team needs to change. He described that he could see what is happening because it is playing out in front of him and he has people on that team:

And I can see another ProfCo team . . . that's in absolute disarray because the confusion between the exec sponsor and the leader . . . they're falling over each other which then just causes total confusion from a client side and a team side, and it all just doesn't work and then you're done. I mean it's, so the whole team needs to change . . . it's all playing out in front of me. Because a lot of it's based in the UK. So, actually I can see it. I can see it. With a lot of the teams, and stuff, if they're based in your country and your market, it impacts us somehow. You know, I've got people on that team from [agency name] so I can see what's going on.

Reading

CEO 1 discussed one of Stephen Covey's books:

I had thought about this a little bit when I was hired because I used to be CEO of my own company before we sold to ProfCo. We had ultimately 75 (people) so not a lot, but still 75. And I think of Stephen Covey. I think, I haven't actually read the book recently, but I think he said something like, you have all these things you do and, and then sometimes there's big things. Up or down. At the end of the year, no one talks about this [gestured mid-level]. They just look at are there one or two of those or two of those [gestured high and low].

CEO 4 said "I am a naturally curious person, so sometimes I read a lot." CEO 7 said "I try to read books when I can." CEO 8 said "As an individual I'm a total autodidact, so whenever I go through something difficult, I try to read my way through, out of it. And try to figure out what to do."

CEO 9 discussed how he has implemented a goal-setting and measurement process described in a book: "I remember that book by John Doerr last year, Measure What Matters, John Doerr is of Kleiner Perkins, the VC firm. He started his career working at Intel..."

Formal programs

CEO 2 talked about leadership training he received when he was a teenager through a cultural organization he was part of:

There was a massive focus on that particular organization on leadership training. So during my teens I went on loads of leadership training . . . we were going off around the country, actually off around the world sometimes, going to these camps, doing these training things . . . Now, me and all my friends, we all look back and go, “that’s actually where we started to really understand about communications, about how to construct an argument, how to lead.” . . . So, I had all of that going into my career.

CEO 4 discussed continuous learning through regular attendance of seminars, training programs and meetings:

I do try to go to as many kind of you know, seminars or training sessions or meetings where you get to know certain things. That’s kind of a continuous, some kind of continuous learning. So, I’ve done lots of seminars and training sessions, meetings, etc. So that you sort of stay on top of the things that are going on.

CEO 8 attended a leadership conference that featured retired US Army general Stanley McChrystal. In learning about siloed military divisions working together, she found points of comparison to her organization:

I got invited to this leadership conference in Washington . . . [featuring] Stanley McChrystal and that brought the Navy Seals, CIA, Delta Force and I don’t know who all these other guys are, (laughs), together, to work against Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda and all that kind of stuff. And where they had all worked in silos . . . I think of our group like that a little bit because everybody’s so smart, so specialized and so good at what they do. And in many cases, very tribal. And the big transformation we’re having to do right now is to be able to figure out how do you get those guys to work together.

Finding 3

Finding 3: A majority of participants (64%) indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work, while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work.

There were multiple factors that were described by the interviewees as facilitative to transformational leadership: team members, other leaders, capabilities of the organization, and clients. Five categories of impediments were identified: lack of teamwork, process, dealing with change, mismatch of values, and challenging role. None of these impediment categories were reported by over 50% of the interviewees. The facilitative and impeding factors mentioned are thematic categories. Each person interviewed shared specifics around their situation and context. See Appendix N for the full table of results for Finding 3.

Table 4.4 Finding 3 Outline

Finding 3

A majority of participants (64%) indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work, while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work. Participants reported several other factors that facilitated and impeded transformational work:

Facilitated

- Team members (18 of 28, 64%)
- Other leaders (15 of 28, 54%)
- Capabilities of the organization (13 of 28, 46%)
- Clients (3 of 28, 11%)

Impeded

- Lack of teamwork (14 of 28, 50%)
- Process (14 of 28, 50%)
- Dealing with change (12 of 28, 43%)
- Mismatch of values (9 of 28, 32%)
- Challenging role (9 of 28, 32%)

Team members

Team members are seen by many participants in this study as supportive of transformational work. CEO 1 described how some young people in the organization have fresh ideas though aren't asked for them. He also said there are managers and experts that are ahead of their day. He also discussed people that deal with clients. He said that all these people are waiting for someone to listen to them and that we can give them a microphone:

So if you start at the bottom, there's young people with fresh ideas . . . These are people that know what needs to be changed, but they're never asked . . . Let them speak, just get out of the way, but give them a platform . . . Then above them, there are the managers that manage the machine and then there are experts... They're ahead of their day . . . And if you sit down with them and say, "Tell me what I need to know." And they'd go, you see them light up, right? . . . Then there is the people that deal with clients . . . But again, the company doesn't hear them at some point anymore . . . So, there's a whole group of people that aren't cynical but maybe frustrated, and that are waiting for somebody to listen. As one of these transformation people, leaders, you can give them a microphone.

Team Member 1B spoke about CEO 1's needing "a big support of doers" (team members). He added that the team "support to deliver on that . . . requires a certain set of competency, capability, and style . . . there is a casting element about it . . . he needs a certain team and capability of people who can then make and build what he's promising, and the value exchange of that is hard work."

CEO 2 spoke about bringing in team members from the outside that provided technical expertise where there were knowledge and technical skill gaps:

. . . I put together a very, org design, HR, legal team around, for all of the technical support that I would need, and then I had a couple of confidantes, trustworthy people inside the business already. We kind of brought the energy of trust and they brought the technical expertise. So that was a very close bit, so it was definitely a recognition of understanding that I don't know everything. I'm not a technical change expert, so I needed to bring them in.

Team Member 4A discussed that the effective utilization of people helps foster loyalty, limits employee churn, extract the best, and bring people together for common work:

. . . People, talent is utilized in the correct way. The right type of people are identified first... folks feel that they are either they have individual goals or they are a part of a collective that has common goals together. I feel that breeds loyalty, so that that limits churn a bit . . . I feel like that's been able to extract the best of the best from each [business unit] and bring people together for a common work. I think it's very easy for people to kind of fall in line.

CEO 5 discussed longstanding senior team members that have worked together for a decade or more. He described this group relies on each other when times get tough and they seek out each other's standards and approvals. Their high standards make some types of work seem easier. The mentality from this relationship overcomes stresses and unknowns.

. . . a leadership team of people who have worked together for 10, 15, 20 years, and the impact has been, even when times get tough, we have each other to rely on and we seek each other's standards and approvals more than . . . we're slave to any numbers. Our standard for how we wanna be, because of the people we are, is so much higher than any of that, that it makes anything else less than that relatively easy or relatively doable . . . That mentality makes us wanna do it together and that overcomes a lot of stress and a lot of unknowns.

Team Member 6A described that CEO 6 has a very strong and diverse group of senior colleagues in the organization that support her and work well together:

She's got a very strong board behind her. I mean her executive leadership are incredible. They're all very different, and I think that also supports her. She's got people around her who have different points of view, different perspectives, different experiences, different lengths of tenure with the business. She wants to hear all of their voice. We all play really well together, we all have immense respect for one another and I think that that chemistry is very supportive to CEO 6.

CEO 8 talked about having a strong team that helped her on a big project. She shared that having talented people is the most important thing for the company and when you have a talented people that work well in a team it will be unbeatable:

Like my own personal point of view about how we will succeed as a company is to have the best talent in each of the key areas . . . There's nothing more important than talent for the company. It is it. Because, I know going in to do these big projects and to put forward clients when I have that team like I had in [country name], that was an unbeatable team. If you [the client] did not choose that team, then you were not really, probably very smart. (laughs)... it was complicated and difficult to do. But when I left that day, I said to [ProfCo CEO], if we operate like that every time. We will be unstoppable.

Team Member 8A shared that the team is the “biggest accelerator of successful leadership” and that enthusing the team helped him and CEO 8 be more effective as leaders:

So if you do it well, the team has been very, the enthusiasm that we’ve generated in the team, it’s the biggest accelerator of successful leadership. So in dealing with the team, yeah, by enthusing the team, CEO 8 and I became more successful, and more effective as leaders.

CEO 9, similarly to CEO 5, talked about colleagues that have worked together for a long time and that have established interdependence and that have each other’s backs. CEO 9 used the term “tribes” to refer to people that travel together in their career across companies and the benefits of working together for a long time:

It’s tribes of people that travel together in their career. And that interdependence on each other is powerful when it’s powerful. When I started my second agency, I had a little less than 20 people I wanted to hire, and I hired 19 of them and 20 years later, we have seven still working together. And we’ve grown up together, and when we see each other across the room, we got each other’s back like you wouldn’t believe. But we also will call each other’s shit out faster to each other than anybody on the (laughs) planet ‘cause we know when the other person’s making it up or not doing what they should be doing, say they’re gonna do.

The category of team members being supportive of work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that the team they work with is their partner of choice and that they show a positive attitude, teamwork, strategic thinking, and help derive strong insights:

[Agency name] is [client organization name]’s partner of choice for research and insights. Throughout our dealings with [agency name], they have shown a positive “can do” attitude and great teamwork. Their strategic thinking, coupled with an eye for detail and a deep understanding of the [client organization name] business, has helped them derive very strong insights in all their research.

Other leaders

Other leaders within or external to the business were found to be supportive of transformational efforts and work in general. For CEO 1, in his experience, “what really helps in that case, in [the previous organization he worked at] and also now with [the organization he leads now] is that real enablement and support from senior leaders. Only from the very top.”

CEO 2 talked about the valuable community of leaders of large teams across ProfCo:

The team leader community is good, ridiculously. We have a WhatsApp group and that’s probably where most of the business is done. Team leaders will go, “does anyone know. . .” and somebody will go “oh, I used to speak to him” or whatever. That works really well . . .

CEO 3 discussed an overlap in values with his boss of many years, which has been supportive and encouraging on a personal level, even when his boss didn’t fully understand the work CEO 3 was doing:

. . . where me and ProfCo had this kind of 30% overlap, [boss’ name] and I had a 70% overlap. He provided me the support, space, and the ability to really be who I am. And we’re not the same by any stretch, but he absolutely valued that and provided me the support and air cover to operate that way. And encouragement to operate that way. Even when he didn’t fully understand what the heck I was doing and what I was up to.

CEO 4 discussed about working on a business pitch and how an enthusiastic, open, supportive leader from one of the agencies that is part of the pitch was helpful in offering resources to help win the pitch:

I’m working on this pitch now and it will, it does require people from different operating companies to come together into one team . . . So, I talked to [leader name] and you know, [agency name] is a big part of that pitch but it’s not going to be the only one. And [leader name] is incredible at saying, “Just take what you need. Whatever you need, just take it. Let us know. We’ll find a way to support you. Let’s just go and win this thing.” That’s fantastic. That you have someone

who's leaning forward with enthusiasm and openness, as opposed to putting up barriers to, to getting things done.

Team Member 4B shared about how ProfCo's CEO and Chief Client Officer are very supportive of their business:

Because it's a big business, and it's the way the company is structured, we have strong support from ProfCo CEO and [the Chief Client Officer]. That definitely helps. Because, there is never a situation where we don't get support from them.

CEO 6 talked about the camaraderie, collaboration, and helping among the senior leaders on the internal ProfCo board:

. . . and there's a real camaraderie among the senior leaders on [ProfCo CEO's] internal board . . . [ProfCo CEO] believes in collaboration, which I do, too. You're always gonna have some competition 'cause we do overlap in a lot of areas. Some of the disciplines, but for the most part I want to help. I really like [CEO name] at [agency]. I, and I'm a big champion. I always talk about [agency name]. I, [name of another CEO]'s great. I mean, they're all great and you want to help each other, and I think that [ProfCo CEO] has built that and that is huge compared to where we were for many, many years before [ProfCo CEO].

Team Member 8A said that CEO 8 can leverage her direct relationship with ProfCo CEO to accelerate work when needed, though conveyed that ProfCo CEO shouldn't need to be bothered:

What's helping is that, which is a sad thing to say in a way, is that CEO 8 could leverage her direct relationship with [ProfCo CEO] when it was needed. When we needed to accelerate she could just get a decision from him. Whereas, and I say sad because I don't think it should be really be needed. He shouldn't be bothered with it. But you know, these things need to happen sometimes to accelerate things.

Team Member 9B shared about CEO 9's informal network of executives that serve as sounding boards for ideas and that are part of CEO 9's support system:

I think he has an informal network of executives, both on the client side and outside of clients that he sort of uses as sounding boards for his ideas and so that he knows where the industry is going . . . he has good relationships up in the executive suite at [named three international companies] . . . and it allows him to pressure test ideas or describe things that the agency is doing that he might be

thinking about, but do that in a way that's not either selling or putting pressure on the idea. He can bounce ideas . . . off of very senior clients to get reaction and that helps guide his business forward. And he's able to do it in a non-threatening environment. I think that's a big part of his support system.

The category of other leaders being supportive of work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that while there are challenges with some resources, he/she has had fantastic experience with several leaders that have proactively and effectively managed the business:

Most of the team on my cluster is great but there are persistent challenges with a couple of resources that remain unresolved. Overall though the experience has been fantastic with leaders like [name] and especially [name], and Engagement Managers like [name] proactively and effectively managing the business, relationship and execution.

Capabilities of the organization

Capabilities of the organization refers to the strengths and the value of various operating units in the business. These units are in some cases within the particular agency of the interviewee, or across ProfCo.

CEO 2 was very appreciative of ProfCo's legal team, particularly for employment law advice, exits (layoffs), and helping CEO 2 and his agency stay out of court proceedings:

. . . employment law advice and also getting us to keep our nerve and taking stuff out of our plates . . . and [name] helped with a lot of the exits and doing the paperwork and just being there just saying, "say this, say that, keep on going it's fine, it's fine" because it doesn't matter how many people I've exited out in this business over the years, every time you do it, you are, the labor laws in Europe and the UK are very tight and I've also in the past, got it wrong and which has ended up in court proceedings and things. So, I think, and it could be just a couple of words that you said at a meeting . . . So having that support, that back-up was amazing.

CEO 3 believes the: “talent choices that [ProfCo CEO] is making are pretty important and symbolic to me about the kind of company we’re trying to become. That’s been very helpful.”

Team Member 3A spoke about technological systems in the organization that have been helpful:

It’s convergent systems, so all the technology and the processes that we use have to work in an interconnected way. We’d rather take the third-place option in each category if they all work together than the number one option if they don’t work together, right, where the, the whole is much greater than the sum of its parts.

Accessing talented people across the organization and organizational clusters were described as helpful by CEO 4:

I would say access to resources and talent and the ease accessing those when you know where to look. I think that’s a huge enabler. The fact that we do have pretty much everything available to us within ProfCo. It’s just a matter of knowing where to look and . . . Some of the organizational clusters certainly help.

Team Member 4B talked about ProfCo’s multiple “very strong, specific capabilities, which not many agencies, networks can claim.”

CEO 5 discussed the culture of his business as helping to support the operational aspects of the business:

I think what I’ve always done has been a, culture first and, culture and capability first, and operations second sort of leader, and I think it’s served me well. I think a lot of things in ProfCo and big companies, and handbooks, tend to put some of the operational things first. I’ve always been the opposite because I believe that, by having a great culture, it’s easier to work through the operational things once you’ve built a culture.

Team Member 5A describes the entrepreneurial spirit within the company that helps with telling the story of the company, pitching, winning new clients, building relationships, and doing things they have never done before:

I think we have a little bit of an entrepreneurial spirit that comes from growing up in an industry that has had several transformations . . . you had to kind of really strengthen your new business muscle . . . And so we got really good, and really strong at telling our story, at pitching, at learning how to go back out and continue to earn and win clients. So that muscle became really strong. We kind of developed entrepreneurial spirit at the core, that we loved to go out there, we love to make, building relationships, we love to do things that we never done before. So that spirit kind of kept building.

CEO 4 praised the standing in the market of ProfCo and the size and scale, which helps to convey gravitas and credibility, though she also mentioned that size and scale could contribute to slowness:

. . . ProfCo's standing in the market. So, our size, our scale, our strength is definitely helpful . . . not only does that lead to us having the talent and the expertise but it also leads to us having, and the tools obviously, but it also leads to us having certain, I don't know, gravitas, or, we can credibly say something and it will be believed . . . And when I said that our size and our scale is a huge enabler for many things, it is obviously also a huge barrier to quick and agile ways of working.

The category of capabilities of the organization being supportive of work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client reported that an agency that he/she recently started working with had strong capabilities, while also suggesting that they could deliver more than what is asked of them:

I have recently started working with [agency name], the capabilities are strong and the team is fantastic. However, I think there is opportunity for them to deliver more meaningful interactions and insights than what's asked from them given their expertise and data availability.

Clients

Clients are also seen to be supportive by a few participants. Team Member 3A said that focusing on the clients and asking questions based on needs of clients is helpful to the work:

I think what is most helpful to me is a focus on the client because, if that becomes your tuning fork to an extent, then it becomes a very easy way of just asking a question of like does this help deliver better results for our client?

Team Member 7B spoke about CEO 7's client interactions as being very personally and professional supportive:

So I think she is well supported by her passion for clients, and when she can get, when she can talk to clients and meet with clients and be with clients, I think that's very, that is personally supportive to her and professionally supportive to her. Even though it's more work. It's the work that she enjoys. So I think that it's really important that we help her cultivate more and more clients and more and more client relationships.

Team Member 8A discussed that having a partnership with the client is helpful versus having a classic, send-and-receive relationship. In the partnership, the agency and the client are together when the problems arrive, define the problems together, and jointly come up with a solution.

I think to answer the helpful . . . it is more of a partnership than I've ever come across. . . So in a classic relationship, client has a problem, develops a brief, sends it to us. Says that you've got two weeks to respond. We come back with an answer . . . In this new relationship, we are there to start when the problems arrive and we write the briefs together . . . That's quite a fundamental shift of how you work together . . . getting away of this dogma of send and receive relationship. I send a brief, I receive an answer, no. You don't send a brief, we talk about the problem together. And then we first of all define what the problem is together, and then we together come up with a solution.

The category of clients being supportive of work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that they successfully collaborated with an agency team and during that time, jointly they cultivated a fun and dynamic partnership:

[Agency name] have collaborated with us on our recent successful campaigns that have helped strengthen our brands. They have proposed strong ideas and have been helping us with the consumer and [name of client] brand journeys. Together, we have cultivated a fun and dynamic partnership environment.

Lack of teamwork

Several interviewees discussed lack of effective teamwork or barriers to effective teamwork as a major challenge. CEO 1 discussed that some people below executive levels can be focused on defending the status quo and resisting change out of a concern of being destabilized or losing power:

The very most senior leaders, they thrive by kicking everything around and changing it again. Everybody else has vested interest in the current status quo. And they will be very subtle or unsubtle in defending the status quo . . . Those are people that have made it to, they're probably not going to be a CEO. Well maybe one of them will... And all the others have reached a pinnacle of their career . . . So they gotta defend it. And they will resist change 'cause it might mean that they get this power and not more. Because it, that change can destabilize them or . . . reduce their power . . .

CEO 3 discussed that ProfCo's culture of "hunters and heroes" drives competitive behavior, individual behavior versus teamwork, and encourages individuals to take credit for teamwork. Winning business this way can be margin dilutive (weakens company profits) and is not helpful to ProfCo:

. . . I think the challenge is . . . a culture that's built on hunters and heroes. So if [ProfCo CEO] is now the person I've got to please, I'm going to run out, slay the dragon, bring the dragon back and drop it at [ProfCo CEO]'s feet and say, take my bow, and say thank you very much. So I think it drives a lot of competitive behavior. I think it drives a lot of individual behavior. I think it drives the idea of these heroic identities where individuals take credit for teamwork . . . Because, actually [our company]'s won plenty of new business that has been margin dilutive as shit, and not helpful for ProfCo.

Team Member 3A commented on territoriality when people don't commit to a greater good and if they don't understand value exchange. He also said that if people want to own all steps end-to-end, working within the ProfCo matrix organization structure becomes difficult.

I think territoriality becomes a problem if people don't commit to a greater good and to understanding that there's a value exchange, which is that if we mutually

specialize, I might give up three things to you and you might give up three things to me and that makes our lives bet- if people don't view it that way, if they always want to own everything from an end-to-end perspective, working within a matrix organization becomes very, very difficult.

Team Member 5A shared that CEO 5 is fueled by the energy of people, however there are a few individuals in the organization that are negative and that don't contribute to or resonate well in their work environment:

I think he is absolutely fueled by the energy of people, others, momentum, positivity. He's an optimist by nature . . . There can be people who are toxic or people who, we don't have very many of them here, but people who are negative and don't add to their environment on a personal level. Don't tend to resonate well, I think, in our environment because we're built on kind of working together and that type of, building that type of energy.

Team Member 7B discussed that the biggest leadership challenge has to do with the leadership team being a group of individuals that are not yet a team:

I think the biggest challenge that we have with leadership that she is grappling is that right now it's about individuals. It's not actually about the team . . . people are still in a very, even some of our senior people are still in anxious spots . . . We still have some pretty big gaps in our leadership team, and therefore it's become, it's still about, in certain cases it's still about individuals. And that's really, that's difficult for her as a team leader to have 20 individuals versus a team of 20 . . .

CEO 8 discussed the difficulty in putting a team together in a particular market, describing that because the calibration of that team isn't right, it requires keeping at it:

Also have situations like in [country] where I've not been able to pull that off. I've not been able to get the complexion and the people right, partnership right, the country manager. I, all of those points, client's crazy, all that kind of stuff. Just can't get that calibration right. So when it works it works, and when it doesn't, it's just, you've gotta just keep at it.

Team Member 8B discussed how ProfCo is a siloed organization, making it difficult to mobilize teams of people to work on projects for clients who have similar needs:

I think the biggest challenge . . . is the organization ProfCo, frankly. I mean, how siloed the company is . . . So it was often difficult to get, to help mobilize that sort of new team . . . you have incredible strength, and incredibly talented people. But bringing those out into, and applying those into clients that are, that have similar need is a very difficult challenge . . . it was mobilizing the team to actually get it done.

The category of lack of teamwork impeding work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client described that their agency team did not have a spirit or attitude of teamwork and that the team was oriented towards their self-interest: “. . . not active, not professional, not customer-oriented, fully interest-oriented, selective operation, no teamwork spirit and attitude. . .”

Process

Processes refers to a broad range of organizational and business protocols, policies, patterns, and established conventions. Some processes are mandated, while others are accepted as normal ways of doing business.

CEO 2 talked about the challenges with ProfCo financial and human resources processes during a period of organizational restructuring that he led:

. . . part of the problem is the ProfCo financial and HR processes. So, hiring and firing, getting with severances through all of that, because as you're changing people out and you've got to get them out, so that's hard. ProfCo didn't make that easy and then you want to replace quickly, they didn't make that easy either. So, sign offs, all of that, was just really difficult. Just added so much pain and tension to it, whereas if we could have just probably done without any approvals needed, and I understand why, don't get me wrong, you know, why. Then it would have been easier.

CEO 4 spoke about ProfCo organizational structures not being great enablers and that culture and the intent to work together helps where structures hinder:

. . . the structures themselves are not really great enablers at the moment . . . the culture helps where the structures themselves could hinder if you know what I mean. So I don't, I wouldn't say the structures themselves are a huge enabler. But

we're able to work around and across those structures because of the culture and the intent to work together.

Team Member 4B, who works on the same business as his manager, CEO 4, shared that the assignments for cross-ProfCo work require multiple rounds of alignments before people can even touch the work and that there is a lot of time wasted on discussing revenue share, which is painful and “absolutely chaotic”:

So, for any project where we need to get the right people from across ProfCo, we have to do at least multiple rounds of . . . alignments, with the global CEO, the local CEO, and the other people to get one or two of their people to even touch the work . . . All [business units] have different P&Ls (profit and loss accounts) so even if there's one project, there is a lot of waste of time discussing who will get how much revenue share, and how each organizations are going to get compensated. Okay, even before we start doing the work. And this is painful, because in many situations clients do not give that clarity at the beginning . . . So it is, it is absolutely chaotic.

CEO 6 said: “I hate process. I know we need it. I know it. It drives me nuts and sometimes I short-circuit the process.”

CEO 7 referred to the ProfCo hiring and firing process as taxing and rigid, though understands why it is in place:

. . . the whole hiring and firing process can be slightly taxing. But similarly, if we were all growing and doing brilliantly, then we'd probably wouldn't need to have such rigid processes in place. And I get that, that's not, that's still the case at the moment. So, you know, it is what it is.

CEO 4 described that bespoke business models need to be created every time for clients, which is very time consuming, takes a lot of energy, and is costly. She said the organization lacks certain aspects that enable transformation more easily:

But it does make it more difficult to for instance, put together different models for clients that are needed these days. The thing that I find most challenging is the fact that, pretty much in every instance, you have to start everything from scratch because you're building something bespoke every single time as opposed to having a bit of a plug and play . . . Because we don't have certain aspects of what it takes to enable transformation ready and packaged up, if you know what I

mean. It always has to be a bespoke, from scratch, approach. Which is very, very time consuming, takes lots of energy, takes lots of people's involvement, which is, in the end, costly.

The category of organizational processes impeding work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that the team that they work with, while doing a good job, still has considerable improvement to make on campaign support because of the way the processes in their businesses are organized on a global level:

In terms of content / strategy, I think [agency name] does a good job. Organizational and in terms of campaign support, however, there is still considerable improvement to be made. This is partly due to the way [client name] and [agency name] organize the processes on a global level...

Dealing with change

Dealing with change encompasses things like challenges with internal change, mergers, acquisitions, changes with teams, changes in the industry, and changes at client organizations.

Team Member 4B discussed that it is very easy to fall behind when a client is restricting themselves. He also discussed the need to catch up with changes at the client organization, which makes it harder to bring new things to them and generate value:

... one of the ... challenges with [client organization name] trying to change their own, restructure themselves, restructure the way they do business, the way they prioritize their own go-to-market strategies and so on, so forth. In this situation it is very easy to, I would say, fall behind, and trying to just, and spend lot more time trying to catch up with what they're doing. And, versus trying to outsmart them. Versus, generating value which they want to see, they would see that we are able to bring new things to them instead of just trying to chase and manage and match what they are asking us from.

Team Member 5A discussed that it is challenging that everything changes quickly in professional services businesses. He also shared that clients are undergoing transformation too:

I think the most challenging aspects of the business, well I mean I think this is such a challenging business in general because how quickly everything changes. How quickly everything changes and in some ways our clients are various places within that transformation also. So you know in some ways our clients are leading transformation and some ways we're leading transformation.

Team Member 6B shared that he has worked on a merger in his organization that has been incredibly complicated. There has been a lot of operational frustration, stuff that gets in the way, and crises:

. . . mergers are incredibly complicated. A lot of personalities, lot of feelings, lot of operational frustration, and you know a lot of stuff that just gets in the way of your day . . . I think I would caveat up my experience by saying we've been in the trenches of what I think the most complicated merger I've been a part of . . . it was really around out of necessity and urgency and a lot of crises . . .

CEO 7 also discussed the challenge of a merger. She discussed that it is challenging to integrate two businesses that are very different, stop the bleeding (business losses), turn the business around, and align people.

I think we got a challenge of integrating two businesses that are very different . . . And you smash those together, and you don't get super growth straight away. But what you need to do is to plug the, to stop the bleeding, and to turn that business around. Get people all aligned, train all your staff, bring in new people, sort out even leaseholds and having one email address. Having a new website, taking people on that journey . . . Winning new business and making sure that the revenue isn't declining. I mean those are all challenges that I face every single day.

Team Member 7A's description of the challenges with that same merger provides some additional perspectives, particularly around different languages, different ways of working, and different ways of interpreting:

Well, we've just merged together two companies that have two different languages really, two different ways of working, so that's one of the biggest challenges I would say. And then, also having not just two different ways of working, but just approaching client challenges from different perspectives, so I would say that's kinda the number one challenge . . . CEO 7 can have a conversation with a team, and they can all nod and say yes, but they interpreted it

totally different then how she may have intended it, and how do you know if people understood her or not?

CEO 8 discussed the back to back turnover of ProfCo's CEO and turnover of the CEO of her client organization as being difficult and stressful. In that time, some clients tried to push against her team in some markets:

. . . navigating the [name of prior ProfCo CEO] to [name of new ProfCo CEO] thing was difficult for me . . . and then I lost a CEO of the client same time. So I, our CEO and their CEO left at the same time. So that was actually super stressful. But it's kind of worked out okay. But we've also had to really dig in 'cause we, some of the clients took that opportunity to try to push against us. So while we've had this big win in the [name of country], we've also had other people trying to kick us in other markets.

CEO 9 discussed that there is a greater level of fear during a period of transformation:

I think the challenges in when you have got a transformation going on, whether it be our clients then having a transfor- business transformation or digital transformation or, as ourselves doing a transformation, is, fear is bigger. Fear is more intense.

Team Member 9B discussed that work that is historically done by firms in the industry is being changed by technology platforms. The technology disruption requires agencies to rethink how they service clients, how they build teams, how to scale up, or reskill people to meet new demands:

. . . much of the work that historically done by [firms in our industry] is increasingly being changed. The work flow is being changed by a handful of technology platforms . . . It's that technology disruption and having to rethink the way we service clients. How we build teams for them and maybe how we scale up or reskill people to meet the new demands.

The category of dealing with change causing work impediments was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client discussed that the customer service team has

had multiple changes and lacks consistency, which makes it unsustainable to maintain service and consistency:

Changing constants in the customer service team. We have not been able to maintain consistency for more than two years. Team changes every three or four months. We've been through three account directors, countless account managers and account executives. We do the integrations, we divide the strategy, we integrate the professionals with our internal clients and in average four months the team is changed cyclically. It is unsustainable to maintain such good service and consistency in the team's learning curve.

Another client referred to organizational changes, plans that constantly change, and interest in how the agency team evolves to meet changing needs:

The organizational changes are not working for us. The new team is not meeting deadlines, The plan is constantly changing. I am interested in how [name] team evolves to meet the changing needs of market. I want the [name] process to be high value to our business stakeholders. I am confident we can do that.

Mismatch of values

Some of the participants in this study describe differences in values and expectations of people in their organization or across businesses as a challenge. CEO 2 discussed that to go through transformation, it's vital to have shared vision and this is not just about being clear; it's about whether others believe in the vision and understand their role in it:

Not having a shared vision and not having the talent, the leadership roles that believe in that vision. That's the worst thing. So, your team, as a leader, if your team, whoever leads your team, don't actually believe in what you're doing, forget it. It's just never going to work. You're not going to transform, it's just never going to happen . . . I mean, not believing is the same as not being clear, and so either they don't understand it, don't believe in it, and also if they don't understand their role in it as well, you're never gonna go through that transformation.

Team Member 2A talked about the "noise" that some people can make when going through transformation, particularly significant people leaving the business, which

can “make life very difficult. He also mentioned that if the people in the business aren’t right, they need to be changed.

The barriers . . . are . . . the disproportionate noise that individuals can make when you’re going through a transformation. So particularly significant leavers. They can make, they might make life very difficult internally and externally . . . we’re a people business. And our assets are our people, and if your assets aren’t right, you have to change them.

In talking about the same business transformation discussed by CEO 2 and Team Member 2A, Team Member 2B said there was “resistance” and “excellent people in the wrong roles.”

Team Member 3A spoke about how people that create problems in an organization are often the ones asked to fix those problems and the need is really to bring in new and different ideas and move beyond past structures:

I think people are often frequently trying to answer the same probl- they are trying to answer the problems with the same people that created them, and so the need to bring in new and different ideas and move beyond past structures without it being viewed as an indictment of how we did things before . . .

CEO 3 discussed about ProfCo not being interested in dimensions of the business that he is interested in that are not part of the P&L (profit and loss):

They wouldn’t show an interest in it. If you show it in a meeting, you say, “Here’s how we’re doing on all these dimensions of our business,” they wouldn’t, they’ll pick up their cell phones and start doing emails the minute you want to talk about anything that’s not in the P&L.

CEO 5 discussed that people often get overly promoted and thus move further and further away from the role that they were hired for and that they are good at:

. . . in agencies, what happens is people get overly promoted. The problem is people get overly promoted into positions where they’re managing people who are managing people, and you get, sometimes, the system’s set up for you get farther and farther away from the actual thing that people were good at that got them there in the first place, and that’s clients and new business.

CEO 6 discussed feeling conflicted. She said that one of her challenges is that she is asked to do things such as serve on risk committees, which takes her away from leading her business. She also discussed how ProfCo asked her to manage a piece of business that she wouldn't have control over, which feels unfair to her.

I feel very conflicted in my role right now because I'm being asked to do a lot of things for ProfCo. Risk committees . . . [it] is removing me from things I could be doing for [my business] and if [my business] doesn't do well, ProfCo won't do well . . . And I think there's conflicting goals in terms of, like, the country manager. And I say, they know I've said, "If you're gonna give a P&L to a country manager, you can take that business away from me. I only oversee businesses that I have control over and I run the P&L for . . . I'm not gonna spend time on something that I'm not really accountable for." . . . I want to be reviewed and judged and bonused on what I can control 'cause that's fair.

CEO 8 discussed that it's a challenge if people are working from a basis of fear, loss, concern, and protection versus working from a basis of growth, abundance, and change. She said if people are not up for change, they may feel like things are being taken away and they will try to protect the status quo.

I think the biggest problem, when it's challenging, is if people are working from a basis of fear and of loss and of concern, and of protection, than one of growth and abundance and change. So it has a lot to do with that continuum of transformation from no change to changing everything, right? . . . So it's about embracing that level of change. But if you're not up for that then everything feels like it's being taken away from you . . . And they'll just lock down . . . They don't share . . . And then they'll just go back and do whatever they want to do to try to protect the status quo.

The category of mismatch of values impeding work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that while the people working on the account are knowledgeable and add value, there is mismatch of expectations:

Really good knowledgeable people with some great value to add to our account. However, that is balanced by what can feel like a lack of attention to detail and sometimes a mismatch of expectations about delivery dates and content.

Challenging role

A number of the CEOs and team members interviewed in this study describe the work as very demanding. In commenting on the organizational change that CEO 2 led, he described that it was exhausting, harder than he estimated, and difficult despite having done change projects before:

. . . for that eight-month period where I was leading from the front, the drive, the energy, the focus to complete the change and get it all the way into the end was on my shoulders, and that was exhausting. There were moments in time when I just went, I don't know if I'm going in the following morning . . . I underestimated how hard it would be . . . it was really very difficult and I'd been doing this for a long time . . . I've never done a change at this scale and at this size before, but a lot of it wasn't new to me. But even so, yeah, it was quite shit.

Team Member 4A described the work as demanding, with competing needs, complex, with multiple components, and sometimes stretching over long periods:

I think at the end of the day, what makes it demanding are the demands of the business. I think I used the word relentless before. We're a talent business. You know, agencies always have competing needs and I think that the toughest thing is when you're running big businesses like CEO 4 is running that are complex and have multiple components to them and projects, some of them are quick hits, but some of them stretch over a long period of time and clients and value continuity.

Team Member 6A said that CEO 6 is involved in many aspects of the business, there is a sense that there isn't enough time in the day to do all the work, and that she has to put out fires (crises) in the business:

She gets pulled in a lot of directions . . . We talk about our businesses having these three pillars of people, clients, and agency . . . She is deeply embedded in each of those pillars which spreads anybody thin . . . I'm certain there are days where she feels there is not enough time in the day, or that she doesn't really get to focus on what she wants to focus on, because she's had to put out some fires.

Team Member 9A discussed that CEO 9's work is challenging because there are quarterly financial pressures from working in a publicly listed company that entail

driving revenue growth. Also he said that CEO 9 has to work across a number of businesses that have been stitched together:

I think the biggest challenge in the kind of role that he has is that, well obviously it's that he works for a public company. So there's always, financial, quarterly financial pressure. It maybe would be different if the company was private. It could just maybe focus on profitability. So he has to drive top line growth and he has to do that in a way, he has to do that across a number of small businesses sort of stitched together.

The category of challenging roles impeding work was corroborated by client satisfaction survey data. One client wrote that there was a "project delay due to complexity of [agency] internal alignment [was] a drag to business." Another client described that it is sometimes difficult and complex to work with the agency and that digital work is complex:

During this year there were some good changes made in the [agency] team and I believe 2020 will be a better year. Good work with other Agencies, good alignment and synergies. At the same time sometimes is difficult and complex to work with [agency]. Delivery of digital work/assets is very complex, usually expensive, late and sometimes don't work either. The simple fact there were digital agencies working with [agency] as part of [agency] offer is a sign that the digital thinking is not yet totally embedded in the Agency.

Digital work was also described as complex by another client, along with finance delivery being complex:

Digital implementation of projects seems too complex . . . Good client service, but too many changes recently have impacted the level of knowledge and understanding of the organization. Will get better for sure. Good media strategic thinking and some pockets of excellence (e.g. social buying live) . . . Finance delivery always complex. Digital operations implementation seems unnecessary complex on the way its managed.

Summary of Findings

This chapter described four major findings from this study. The research questions were presented, followed by information on study participants, including Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire scores for the CEOs in the study. I then presented an in-depth discussion of each major finding, presenting the range of perspectives of participants within each category. The quotations used were intended to provide nuances of the experiences and perspectives of the research participants in relation to the research questions.

The first finding suggests that for CEOs of professional services businesses that are seen as transformational, idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are most commonly used.

The second finding identifies that transformational CEOs of professional services businesses are most likely to have learned to lead largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences. Other ways of learning include dialogue with others, observation, reading, trial and error, and formal programs.

The third finding was that team members are the most frequently cited source of support for leaders, while the lack of teamwork and organizational process were the tied most frequently cited challenge for leaders in the study. Other supports found were other leaders, capabilities of the organization, and clients. Other impediments found were dealing with change, mismatch of values, and challenging role.

The three key findings presented and discussed in this chapter help to address this study's research problem, which is to understand the ways CEOs of professional services businesses are transformational in complex work environments, the factors that help and

hinder transformational leadership, and how leaders become transformational. The key findings will be analyzed, synthesized, and interpreted in Chapter V. Table 4.5 below shows each research question beside the major findings statement and the statement rewritten as an analytic category. CEOs of professional services businesses perform transformational leadership behaviors by recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central (analytic category 1). They draw on past experience to learn to be transformational (analytic category 2). They understand that team members and organization processes impact the work of transformational leaders (analytic category 3).

Analytic Categories

Table 4.5 Relationship between research questions and findings leading to analytic categories

Research Question	Finding Statement	
What actions do CEOs who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?	A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.	→
How do these CEOs describe how they learned to be transformational?	All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences.	→
What factors do these leaders perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?	A majority of participants, 64%, indicated that team members facilitated transformational work; while, a lesser number of participants, 50%, described both lack of teamwork and organizational process as impeding their transformational work.	→

CEOs of professional services businesses learn and perform transformational leadership behaviors by:

↓

Recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central

↓

Drawing on past experiences

↑

Understanding that team members and organization processes impact the work

Chapter V

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION, AND SYNTHESIS

Overview

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments. The analyses and interpretations discussed in this chapter may inform recommendations on how to develop and support leaders and high potentials in professional services firms.

There were a total of 28 people interviewed in this study, which include 10 CEOs and 18 team members (up to two team members per CEO). The interviews were structured around these research questions:

1. What actions do CEOs who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?
2. How do these CEOs describe how they learned to be transformational?
3. What factors do these CEOs perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

The major findings of this study are:

1. A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.
2. All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences.
3. A majority (64%) of participants indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work, while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work.

This chapter provides analysis and discussion of the findings that were presented in Chapter IV. I will discuss perspectives on the participant responses I received.

The following three analytic categories were presented at the end of Chapter IV:

1. Recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central;
2. Drawing on past experiences; and
3. Understanding that team members and organization processes impact the work.

Categorical Groupings

The following groupings are based on the particular type of leadership behavior approach the interviewees focused on in the interviews and from the examples and opinions they shared. I have identified three qualitatively different groups among the sample population that I name as: Team-oriented behaviors, Client-oriented behaviors, and Operations-oriented behaviors. These are groupings of people that generally reflect

similar perspectives. In some cases there are overlaps; for example, a Team-oriented leader can also be heavily involved in business operations. Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 below summarize these categories.

These categories of team, client, and operations are based on literature on leadership behaviors. To a large extent, leadership behaviors in many organizations are task-oriented (e.g., scheduling work, providing instructions) and socio-emotive (listening, being approachable) (Judge, Piccollo, & Ilies, 2004). Task can be seen as synonymous with operations. Socio-emotive can be seen as being focused on team members or clients. Desphande, Farley, and Webster define customer orientation as “the set of beliefs that puts the customer’s interest first, while not excluding those of all other stakeholders... In order to develop a long term profit” (1993, p. 27). In professional services firms, customers are known as clients. The three categories of team, client, and operations are supported by Team Member 6A’s description: “we talk about our businesses having these three pillars of people, clients, and agency.” His reference to people can be considered a focus on teams, while his reference to agency can be seen as focusing on business operations.

Team-oriented leadership behaviors refers to a pattern of activities whereby the leader primarily focuses on connecting with, supporting, and developing their team and the organization. Engaging in team-oriented behaviors entails holding team members accountable and focusing on business culture. Eleven participants were found to hold this behavioral orientation.

Table 5.1 Team-oriented behavioral orientation

Participant	Descriptors
CEO 3	He sets a vision for his team, defines annual goals with key leaders, holds them accountable, and checks in with leaders. He talked about teamwork and challenges with teamwork. He likes to solve problems with others versus solving them on his own.
CEO 5	He is hands on and ensures his team is too. He develops trust, creates a nurturing environment, is transparent, helps people feel valued, and communicates successes to the team. He doesn't want to perform roles others on the team should do. He is culture-first and-operations second. He talked about the strength and support of a team that has worked together for a long time.
CEO 8	She assesses the type of team she needs, selects team members, sets common goals, spends time with the team, learns with the team, resolves team conflict, and helps team members embrace change. She cares for the team's health and energy. She uses sports team analogies.
CEO 10	He helps and supports his team members. Through the helping, virtuous circles are created. He aims to behave consistently with his team to gain their trust and support. He takes cultural differences into account when working with teams. He reaches out to colleagues when he doesn't know the answer to something. He values diversity in the team and draws on people's perspectives.
Team Member 1A	He and his manager debate regularly. For some team members, this comes across as demanding and confrontational. Team members are motivated by his manager's clear and compelling vision. His manager is good at inspiring others.
Team Member 2A	Her manager focuses on creating a team with complimentary skills and diverse perspectives. He created a leadership charter for the team. He takes the team through a journey that they have subscribed to. He conveys care about people.
Team Member 2B	His manager has an open style with the team and makes everyone feel like they have a voice. He encourages dialogue and constructive criticism within the team. He has built a leadership team that is supportive of each other and works well together. He knows the experts in the team and brings them in. The team is clear about how they contribute.
Team Member 4A	His manager discusses work and what success looks like directly with the team. She demands that her teams are highly functioning and establishes trust and respect. She reminds team members of goals. She empowers, excites, energizes, and makes team members feel greater than the sum of the parts.
Team Member 7B	Her manager was keen to get the new leadership team together, establishing accountability and autonomy on the team, and empowering the team members. She is keen to develop the functioning of the new team. She recognizes she needs to communicate and reinforce her vision to the team and throughout the organization. She came up with four key behaviors for the organization.
Team Member 8A	His manager has a coaching role on the team and she empowers the team members and deals well with cultural differences. He described her approach for preparing for team meetings and how she facilitates getting the best out of the team, which is inspiring to the team. The enthusiasm she has generated on the team has accelerated success.
Team Member 9A	His manager is very collaborative, empowers team members, treats people well, looks to the team for ideas and approaches, and supports team members. Trust, loyalty, transparency, and authenticity within the team mean a lot to his manager.

Client-oriented leadership behaviors refers to a pattern of activities whereby the leader primarily focuses on supporting the needs of clients, making time for them, partnering with them, innovating with them, and maintaining contact with them. Nine participants were found to have this approach.

Table 5.2 Client-oriented behavioral orientation

Participant	Descriptors
CEO 1	He talked extensively about how he works with clients, how he interacts with them, and how he gets them on board with projects he is launching.
CEO 7	She shifted the type of work her agency did for clients. She supports clients and said that without clients, they wouldn't be in business. She develops relationships with clients and described a fireside chat event at one client organization that she co-hosted. She explains to clients what the recently merged business that she leads stands for.
CEO 9	He shared examples of conversations with clients. He listens intently to them, draws them out, wants to know what their inner voice is saying, and finds opportunities with them. He learns from observing clients and through dialogue with clients.
Team Member 1B	His manager has an amazing network of clients and he is renowned for it. He nurtures and develops that network. He shapes and shares that vision with them. He mentions their names at conferences. He helps connect clients to each other. He speaks with conviction to clients.
Team Member 4B	He described that they need to keep up with changes in the client organization to be able to add value. They identified the critical stakeholders within the client organization, established strategies accordingly, and set up regular review meetings with them. He talked about how the clients perceive their agency differently now and that their clients have given them awards.
Team Member 5A	At client meetings her manager listens and makes people feel comfortable. He develops genuine relationships with clients. He creates moments of authentic connection with clients during meeting breaks because he recognizes that is where high value exchanges or inspiration happens. He develops trust with clients that becomes the foundation for challenges they are tackling together.
Team Member 5B	He talked about the ambitions and approaches for a client conference that his manager led. His manager is good at developing personal connections with clients, is interested in how business is trending per client, and has high energy to meet with them on business trips.
Team Member 8B	His manager is "incredibly client-centric" – she knows her clients very well and spends "incredible" amounts of time with them. She understands their business very well, including the politics and internal complexities. She was able to help the agency achieve what the client aspired to achieve. She taught him to do things that he believes are right for the client.
Team Member 9B	His manager focuses on establishing rapport and trust with clients. He wants to get to know clients and make them feel comfortable. He has built and leverages a network of clients to learn where the industry is going and as a sounding board for ideas. He recently hosted a number of clients at his home to share insights.

Operations-oriented leadership behaviors refers to a pattern of activities whereby the leader primarily focuses on business processes, roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Eight participants were found to have this orientation.

Table 5.3 Operations-oriented behavioral orientation

Participant	Descriptors
CEO 2	He talked extensively about the change process at his agency and the aspects that he led.
CEO 4	She talked about the work entailed in setting up teams from across the organization, developing a scale for creativity, and establishing a creative council. She talked about working around and across structures. She talked about the process of creating bespoke solutions and business models.
CEO 6	She said: "I'm very operationally-minded." She talked extensively about challenges with organizational structure, expectations, and policies. She described frustrations with a line of business that she doesn't have control over. She mentioned about competitiveness between lines of business and a gap in communications that resulted in a problem.
Team Member 3A	He talked about the brainstorming process that he and his manager have for new projects. He discussed the structuring and delivery of a change project in their business. He and his manager workshopped through the pieces of the vision. They discussed expectations of timing, budgets, and restrictions. His manager was interested in the tasks, sub-tasks, and the interrelationships.
Team Member 3B	His boss shifted the business from a traditional planning business to a more consultative service. His boss developed four key priorities for the business and put in place systems and processes to measure progress, including quarterly check-ins with key leaders. Once he commits to work with clients, is very keen on implementation and delivery.
Team Member 6A	His manager is "deeply embedded in the operations of the business" and close to the "working daily realities of the business." When a challenge comes up, she can address it directly. She is "detail oriented about the health of the business at all levels." Through her vision of how the business was changing, she guided her organization through the change process.
Team Member 6B	His manager is very focused on operations including people, finances, and metrics. Her hands-on nature means she can be involved in matters ranging from a small account, a massive account, office furniture decisions, or an agenda for a leadership team meeting. He and his manager worked together on many operational issues related to a merger.
Team Member 7A	Her manager is very strategic, is an effective decision-maker, and has a vision that keeps her and others from being distracted. After meeting with clients, she has a clear understanding on how to deliver on the need and how to direct people to achieve that need. She focuses on business integration. She clears up problems in the business without feeling a need to placate people.

From these three behavioral orientation charts above and in Table 5.4 below, which summarizes the orientations, it is seen that there is a disjuncture in most cases in what the CEOs and team members have as their orientations.

Table 5.4: Comparison of behavioral orientations of CEOs and their team members

			Disjuncture
CEO 1: Client	Team Member 1A: Team	Team Member 1B: Client	One consistent
CEO 2: Operations	Team Member 2A: Team	Team Member 2B: Team	Neither consistent
CEO 3: Team	Team Member 3A: Operations	Team Member 3B: Operations	Neither consistent
CEO 4: Operations	Team Member 4A: Team	Team Member 4B: Client	Neither consistent
CEO 5: Team	Team Member 5A: Client	Team Member 5B: Client	Neither consistent
CEO 6: Operations	Team Member 6A: Operations	Team Member 6B: Operations	Both consistent
CEO 7: Client	Team Member 7A: Operations	Team Member 7B: Team	Neither consistent
CEO 8: Team	Team Member 8A: Team	Team Member 8B: Client	One consistent
CEO 9: Client	Team Member 9A: Team	Team Member 9B: Client	One consistent
CEO 10: Team			N/A

Analysis

In this section, the following three analytic categories will be discussed:

1. Recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central;
2. Drawing on past experiences; and
3. Understanding that team members and organization processes impact the work.

Analytic Category 1: Recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central

The activity categories of idealized influence and individualized consideration come from Bass and Avolio's model of transformational leadership (1997). The category of idealized influence describes leaders that are role models, have high standards of conduct, are respected and trusted, and provide a vision and mission (Northouse, 2018). Individualized consideration entails listening carefully to needs of individuals, acting as a coach or advisor, developing others, creating a supportive climate, and treating others in caring and unique ways (Northouse, 2018).

The first research question aimed to identify the actions taken by CEOs of professional services firms that are seen to be transformational. The CEOs and team members that were interviewed described a variety of actions. In my study a strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.

In my interviews with 10 CEOs and 18 team members, I found that 11 of them exhibited behaviors that were Team-oriented, nine exhibited behaviors that were Client-oriented, and eight exhibited behaviors that were Operations-oriented. The types of activities described varied based on whether the interviewee behavior described was Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented.

Idealized Influence

Team-oriented behavior participants described being hands-on and modeling the way the team should work. They shared information openly across the organization and believed that being transparent with information and their feelings built trust within the organization. These leaders set high standards for work and interpersonal conduct with the expectation that colleagues would adopt those standards. They described that they intervene to resolve conflict and problems within the team instead of letting the conflict or problems fester. They cultivated the respect of each team member and created an environment of trust and respect within the organization. They developed loyalty and authenticity within the team.

Unlike the Team-oriented behavior participants, the Client-oriented behavior participants discussed developing personal relationships with clients that led to high levels of trust. Client-oriented participants developed and conveyed a compelling vision that influenced clients to get on board with projects. They led events at client organizations focused on values. They explained to clients what their business stands for, which developed trust. They mentioned client names at conferences, with a view to influence more clients to want to be part of their projects. They relied on trust that has been developed with clients to be the foundation for work in the future. They understand the client's business and industry very well, which enabled them to be influential when talking to clients.

In contrast to the Team- or Client-oriented behavior participants, Operations-oriented behavior participants talked about change processes that they led and their vision for their expectations of the business. They set standards for conduct and performance by

creating a scale and establishing a council to evaluate the work. They worked with team members to understand and implement aspects of the vision. They developed key priorities for the business and put in place systems to measure progress. They were involved in many operational matters and they set standards with their decisions. Their clear vision helped them and their team members focus on the operations of the business and not get distracted.

Individualized Consideration

Team-oriented behavior participants described that they defined individual goals with team members and had regular individual check-ins on progress. They helped team members embrace change. They cared for the team's health and energy. They paid attention to create teams with complementary skills and diverse perspectives. They conveyed that they care about people on the team. They helped each person in the organization feel that they have a voice. They know who the experts are in the organization and they actively brought those experts in to support the work. The leader helped each person know how they contributed to the business. They discussed what success looks like with the team. They were keen to bring team members together for meetings. They coached and supported team members. They could work with people from different cultures.

Unlike the Team-oriented behavior participants, the Client-oriented behavior participants talked about how they interacted one-on-one with clients. They identified and supported the needs of individual clients. They developed close relationships with clients. They listened intently to clients, wanting to know their motivations and what their inner voice is saying. They nurtured and developed their network of clients. They helped

clients connect with each other. They identified who in their client organizations were the critical stakeholders and set up regular review meetings with them. They helped their clients to feel comfortable. They aimed to create moments of authentic connection with clients.

Operations-oriented behavior participants, on the other hand, spoke with and supported others individually about plans, implementation, roles, and responsibilities. They discussed with others about creating bespoke solutions and models that supported people and the business. They brainstormed with others about new processes to help the business. They advised team members on business metrics, including discussing expectations of timing and budgets.

Analytic Category 2: Drawing on past experiences

My second research question focused on how CEOs of professional services businesses learn to be transformational. All CEOs (100%) in my study learned to be transformational through informal means by drawing on past experiences. In my interviews with 10 CEOs, I found four of them had Team-oriented behavioral orientation, three had Client-oriented behavioral orientation, and three had Operations-oriented behavioral orientation. The types of experiences drawn might differ based on whether the CEO had Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented behavioral orientations.

Team-oriented CEOs in this sample consistently referred to colleagues, teams, and organizations in their reflections on past experience. CEO 3, for example, recognized that when he reached a “plateau” at work earlier in his career that he would be concerned that he was “about to get found out for fraud” by others. This concern made him focus on

his ambition and ask himself questions such as: “What impact do I want to have on other people?”

CEO 5 said there was “a lot to be learned from... ego and a lot of politics in the company” and experienced “being more reflective on things that worked or didn’t work... working to repeat behavior that worked and to amplify things that were good.”

CEO 8 described principles she learned from her experience as a competitive rower. She developed her “competitive spirit” through rowing. In both rowing and in business she enjoys “getting the great joy that you get when you win together. And that’s much more fun than winning alone.”

In contrast to the Team-oriented CEOs, the Client-oriented CEOs in this sample consistently referred to clients in their learnings from experience. CEO 1 found that while clients often said they didn’t want to be like everyone else, when he presented them with a successful case study, the clients said they wanted the same thing.

CEO 7 described that when she joined her organization in the role of leading the UK office, she worked to turn the business around, and she said she learned from that experience. One of the biggest challenges she faced was that the majority of client engagements were smaller scale projects that did not utilize the full capabilities of the business and she worked to grow the types of engagements with clients.

Unlike Team-oriented or Client-oriented CEOs, the Operations-oriented CEOs in this sample consistently referred to business operations in their learnings from experience. When leading an integrated agency team for a pitch for a new piece of business, CEO 2 needed to get six different agencies to work together. CEO 2 described that he learned from this experience of managing a complex business process.

CEO 4 said that her first boss believed in her and got her working on client business right away, which enabled her to get promoted three times in the span of 18 months. CEO 4 also described that she has always needed new business challenges and learning opportunities every two to three years. She had asked to run a market research department and when her boss at the time agreed to let her run that department, she said that upon taking on that role, she quickly learned that it was not what she wanted to do.

Analytic Category 3: Understanding that team members and organization processes impact the work

The third research question in this study aimed to identify the factors that support and impede the work of transformational CEOs of professional services businesses. A majority of participants, 64%, indicated that team members facilitated their transformational work; while 50% described lack of teamwork and organizational processes as impeding their transformational work. Please refer to Table 4.4 in the Findings chapter for a summary of factors that support and impede the work of transformational CEOs and the descriptions after that table for further detail. In my interviews with 10 CEOs and 18 team members, I found that 11 of them were Team-oriented, nine were Client-oriented, and eight were Operations-oriented. The views shared about team members and organization processes varied based on whether the interviewee was Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented.

Team Members

Team-oriented participants found teams were supportive when they created and developed teams that had complementary skills and diverse perspectives. Teams were

also supportive when members felt that they were accountable for and contributing to the work. Team-oriented participants put building the culture of the team ahead of the operations of the team. They acknowledged that people that have worked together for a long time were highly supportive of each other. When they brought the team together, they could establish trust and respect and could empower team members. They said they could step in and resolve conflict within the team to ensure smooth operations. Team-oriented participants described that lack of teamwork can impede the business. They described that an organizational culture of “hunters and heroes” drove competitive behavior and encouraged individuals to take credit for teamwork. They talked about it being a challenge when a team is a group of individuals instead of being a team.

Unlike the Team-oriented participants, Client-oriented participants talked about teams being supportive of the work needed for clients, for example, in helping to build and deliver the work for clients. There were impediments to client work when there were people across businesses that defended the status quo and resisted change. They noted that silos in the company made it difficult to mobilize teams to engage in client work.

In contrast to Team- or Client-oriented participants, the Operations-oriented participants recognized the support of people on their team with human resources, legal, and technical expertise. They acknowledged that others on their team had helped with technical changes in their business. They were aware that territoriality (i.e., wanting to manage and execute all steps in the process) and lack of understanding of value exchange could impede teamwork in a matrix organization.

Organizational Processes

Team-oriented participants discussed how organizational processes can impede work in several ways. They noted that they disliked multiple reporting lines and systems of hierarchy, which could limit a sense of space and inhibit entrepreneurialism. They talked about the difficulty in hiring new team members, particularly when additional approvals were needed to bring on higher-salary team members. They talked about needing to wait for corporate-level decisions to be made about certain markets before they could make changes to teams in those markets.

Client-oriented leaders, on the other hand, focused on how the hiring and firing processes can be taxing while recognizing that if business with clients was growing, rigid hiring practices would not need to be in place. They talked about how staffing assignments for cross-company projects for clients require multiple rounds of alignment and time is wasted discussing revenue share for client work.

Operations-oriented leaders held yet a different perspective as they discussed how financial and human resources processes are burdensome. These processes made it more difficult to hire and fire people. They talked about needing to work around and across company structures and systems. They described trying to short-circuit the processes, even though they understood why they need those company processes. They talked about it being time consuming to create bespoke business models because they didn't currently have what it takes to enable transformation in place.

Summary of Analysis

In this chapter, I have organized participants into leadership behavior groups to more closely examine participant responses. The groups were Team-oriented, Client-oriented, and Operations-oriented. The groupings enable a systemic look at the study findings. The descriptions shared by participants conveyed how they viewed leadership activities, how they learned from their experiences, and the challenges and supports to their work.

Discussion

In this section I explore the insights from the 28 participants in the study. I share opinions for the analyses discussed in this chapter. Where possible, I have suggested literature that discusses these views. I have structured this section using the same analytic categories and the same participant orientations (to team, client, or operations).

Based on my analysis and categorizations of orientations, as can be seen in charts 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, in most cases CEOs and their team members were found not to have the same orientation. This could be due to having different responsibilities and expectations for their roles. It could be due to having different views about what is most salient in the business. Perhaps it could be due to the types of examples that came to mind during the interview. In some instances, the team members interviewed were based in a different office or country than their CEO. Those team members that were not based in the same office as their CEO may have different orientations because of cultural factors or factors to do with teams, clients, or operations in their office.

Team members having the same orientation as each other and their manager can be seen as having a high degree of alignment, which can be facilitative in business. Some CEOs may want their team members to be aligned on orientation and cultivate that alignment. On the other hand, team members who have different orientations can be seen as providing complementary perspectives, which could help uncover blind spots and could enable better ideation and innovation.

Analytic Category 1: Recognizing that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are central

Idealized influence and individualized consideration activities were described differently depending on the orientation of the participant to team, clients, or operations.

Idealized Influence

The idealized influence activities of Team-orientated and Client-oriented participants may be reflective of ways of leveraging referent power. French and Raven (1959) describe five bases of power: 1) coercion, using threat of force or punishment for noncompliance; 2) reward, offering or denying tangible rewards for compliance; 3) legitimate, which comes from being appointed to positions of authority that are recognized by others, which enable them to make demands on others; 4) expert, which is based on knowledge, skills, and expertise; and 5) referent, which is rooted in affiliations, influence, likeability, worthiness, and right to others' respect.

Although business leaders have formal power to reward, punish, and make demands of team members, these types of activities can be seen to be demotivating and disempowering when used. This use of rewards, punishments, and demands is more

within the realm of transactional leadership, which is possibly why these types of behaviors were not reported in the sample I interviewed, which consisted of CEOs that are considered by the organization to be transformational and their team members. In the case of Team-oriented participants, they may view that leveraging referent power over their teams is more motivational and impactful than leveraging coercion, reward, or legitimate power.

Client-oriented CEOs and team members generally have little to no coercive, reward, or legitimate power over their clients. It is the clients who tend to have those forms of power over people that work in professional services, since it is the clients who can hire, fire, and reward their external service providers. The remaining forms of power, per French and Raven's five bases, are expert and referent. These two bases relate to idealized influence, because they entail the ability to be seen as knowledgeable and trustworthy. Professional service providers that can convey a compelling vision to clients and model the way forward may be respected and followed by their clients.

Operations-oriented participants may be more focused on operations when trust has already been demonstrated and established with their team members and clients. If trust is established, those participants may be more able to focus on the execution of the business. On the other hand, it could be seen that prior to establishing trust and influence, it is necessary to provide a solid basis of business operations to deliver on the expectations of clients and colleagues across the business. It is assumed that this rationale may be the case when the business is complex and requires bespoke models, teams, and structures before progress can be made and impact can be demonstrated. Another perspective on the development of an Operations-orientation is that operations could be

the basis of the person's role and responsibilities and operations could have been the focus of the bulk of their career.

Individualized Consideration

The individualized consideration activities of Team-oriented participants might represent the leverage of affiliative, democratic, or coaching leadership styles, which are three of the six leadership styles described by Goleman (2000). The six styles are: 1) coercive, demanding immediate compliance; 2) authoritative, mobilizing people towards a vision; 3) affiliative, building emotional bonds and creating harmony; 4) democratic, forging consensus through participation; 5) pacesetter, setting high standards for performance; and 6) coaching, developing people for the future.

Based on Goleman's (2000) definitions, the affiliative, democratic, and coaching styles all entail listening closely to others. The affiliative style puts attention on people's needs, and builds relationships, empathy, and communication. Those that have a democratic style seek to know what people think, gain inputs from various team members, build collaboration, and attain consensus. The coaching style can be seen to very directly relate to individualized consideration, since it entails helping people to improve their performance and develop their strengths.

The individualized consideration activities of both Team-oriented and Client-oriented participants might represent politically savvy actions with their desired audience of team members or clients. DeLuca defines political savvy as "ethically building a critical mass of support for an idea you care about" (1999, p. 112). DeLuca recommends that leaders know who the key players are, know the power or influence that those players have, identify peoples' agendas, brainstorm win-win possibilities, and build a

coalition for action by linking the individual agendas that people have. It appears that the Team-oriented participants engage in political activities within their organizations, while Client-oriented participants engage in political activities across the organizations of their clients.

The individualized consideration activities of Client-oriented participants might be interpreted as the relationship-building techniques of Maister, Green, and Galford (2000). In their book, *The Trusted Advisor*, which is aimed at individuals working in advisory professions, they describe to build strong relationships with clients, professionals should “try to be understanding, thoughtful, considerate, sensitive to feelings, and supportive” (Maister et al, 2000, p. 37).

The individualized consideration activities of Operations-oriented participants appear akin to a response to challenges to the fundamental health of the business. In *Managing the Professional Services Firm*, Maister (1997) describes that to manage productivity, a firm’s average chargeability (or utilization) must be taken care of, like good hygiene, and if a firm is below reasonable chargeability, it is pointless to focus on long-term strategy. Maister (1997) also discusses underdelegation, which is a problem in professional service firms that reduces profitability, motivation, morale, competitive capabilities, and prevents senior professionals from spending time with clients. Addressing the underdelegation problem requires focusing on operational elements, including profitability measures, tracking activities, and the work scheduling process. Focusing on these elements would require leaders to give individualized attention to people within the business with a view to operational issues.

The individualized consideration activities of all the participants in the study, particularly those that are Team-oriented or Client-oriented, appear influenced by cultural orientation. The majority of my study participants were White and my entire sample was based in the USA and Europe. Markus and Kitayama discuss that the Western view of the self, which is a “view of the individual as an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity” (1991, p. 224) differs from the interdependent view of the self, which is exemplified in Asian, African, and Latin American cultures. Markus and Kitayama describe that “one’s ongoing sense of self functions as a foundational schema that recruits and organizes more specific self-regulatory schemas, including cognitive, emotional, motivational, somatic, and behavioral schemas” (2010, p. 421). The individualized consideration activities of all the participants in the study, particularly those that are Team-oriented or Client-oriented, appear to be based on an independent schema of self. Interactions of those with an independent self schema “encourage the development and reification of individual preferences, goals, beliefs, and abilities... and the use of these attributes as referents and guides for action” (Markus & Kitayama, 2010, p. 423). In other words, due to the view of the self, it could be seen that Western leaders are more likely to provide individualized consideration than non-Western leaders.

The individualized consideration activities of Team-oriented participants appear related to components of procedural justice, which in organizational contexts is about fairness in work settings (Blader & Tyler, 2003). Blader and Tyler propose a model consisting of four components that underlie the way employees judge fairness in the workplace, with the first two components relating to the quality of decision making and the last two relating to the quality of treatment. The four components of the model are: 1)

voice, was there an ability to state my case before decisions were made, 2) neutrality, did the decision maker base the decision on principles or rules instead of their own prejudices or biases, 3) respect, was I treated respectfully, and 4) trustworthiness, do I believe the decision-maker considered the needs and concerns of the parties and do what was best for those people (Tyler, 2014). With the emphases on listening and support, individualized consideration activities seem commensurate with Tyler's descriptions of voice, respect, and trustworthiness.

Analytic Category 2: Drawing on past experiences

Kolb (1984) describes that experience is taken in and then transformed into meaning. Based on the interviews, the participants in this study can be seen to have learned from past experiences. The participants described their learnings from prior experiences, conveying their reflections. According to Schon (1984), reflection is the activity that turns experience into learning.

There may be different reasons for why examples of past experiences drawn on by participants for their learnings are either Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented. One view is that the orientation is influenced by prior managers the participants had in their career. They may be oriented the same way as their prior manager or to the orientation emphasized by that manager.

Another view is that the orientations are influenced by critical incidents within the careers of participants that had more to do with team, client, or operations. If the participants reflect on critical incidents, they can become more aware of assumptions. This is supported by Brookfield (1987), who describes that critical incidents can be

framed in specific, observable happenings instead of generalizations of other experiences that can be vague.

Past experiences drawn on may have been Team-oriented if the participants have been on teams that have a higher degree of team learning. Kasl, Marsick, and Dechant (1997) define team learning as a process of knowledge creation for team members, a system, and for others. Team learning is a form of experiential learning. Teams are often used to solve complex problems in organizations. Senge writes “teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations” (1990, p. 10).

The skills that have been acquired and developed by participants may have shaped the orientation of the past experiences they have drawn on for learning. Katz (1955) suggests that effective leadership depends on three basic skills: technical, human, and conceptual. Technical skills are the proficiencies in certain types of work. Human skills are proficiencies that enable working effectively with people. Conceptual skills refer to proficiency in working with ideas. Katz described that for top management, technical skills are less important. It could be viewed that the Team-oriented and Client-oriented participants have a higher degree of human skills, while the Operations-oriented participants have a higher degree of, or place more importance on, conceptual skills. Their degree of, or orientation to, human skills or conceptual skills could potentially influence the occurrence of teams, clients, and operations when the participants were describing experiences they learned from.

The behaviors described by the participants may lean toward being Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented depending on the situations that the participants find themselves in and their approach to address those situations. The

Situational Leadership® II model holds that different situations require different kinds of leadership and that leaders have to adapt based on the competence and commitment of the followers (Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Nelson, 1993; Blanchard, Zigarmi, & Zigarmi, 2013). According to this model, leaders need to understand the situation, including what goals need to be achieved and whether the followers are skilled and motivated to accomplish the goals. This model suggests that when team members have low competence or commitment, the leader could use a coaching style, which is highly supportive. Participants that have experienced these situations may have been categorized as Team-oriented in this study. When team members have high competence and high commitment, this model suggests that the leader could use a delegating style. A delegating leader offers less goal input and gives control to team members, thus freeing up more time to be Client-oriented.

Summary of Discussion

Idealized influence activities were described differently depending on the orientation of the participant to team, clients, or operations. The differences could be due to the bases of power that they have and leverage.

Individualized consideration activities also varied depending on orientation of the participants. These differences could be due to leadership style, political strategies, relationship-building strategies, in response to business health, cultural orientation, or procedural justice practices.

Past experiences drawn on might have been Team-oriented, Client-oriented, or Operations-oriented based on the influence of prior managers, critical incidents in their

careers, degree of team learning, skills they have developed, and the situations they have found themselves in.

Summary and Contributions to Literature

This study has shown that my sample of CEOs of professional services businesses that are viewed as transformational engage in idealized influence and individualized consideration activities that are likely shaped by the bases of power that they have and leverage, leadership style, political strategies, relationship-building strategies, in response to business health, or cultural orientation.

These CEOs have learned to be transformational largely through informal means, in particular, drawing on prior experiences. Their reflections and learnings from these past experiences could be based on the influence of prior managers, critical incidents in their careers, degree of team learning, skills they have developed, and the situations they have found themselves in.

Team members were seen as impactful to the outcome of work. Organizational processes were frequently described as hindering to the work of study participants.

This study provides additional data and insight on the application of transformational leadership in professional services businesses. There is limited research on transformational leadership in this sector. Other studies on transformational leadership tend to look at other industries, such as information technology, logistics, manufacturing, government, food service, entertainment, healthcare, and higher education. This study found that idealized influence and individualized consideration activities are the most frequently described activities in transformational leaders of professional services

businesses in this sample. Team members and organizational processes were seen as most commonly impacting the work of transformational leaders in this study.

Through the descriptions of participants that encompass working with clients, this study suggests that the leader-follower dyad in the workplace, which is the basis for many models of leadership, could be extended to encompass leader, follower, and client. This extension can more completely represent the work dynamic in professional services businesses, where clients are intimately part of the work flow and influence processes. Clients and client relations could potentially be incorporated into models of leadership beyond transformational leadership.

This study supports Bass and Avolio's (1997) model of transformational leadership, since many of the participant's descriptions could be categorized into either idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation. Through the qualitative approach of this study, sub-categories could be considered for each of the four activity types: Team-oriented, Client-oriented, and Operations-oriented.

Based on the review of the literature I conducted, there appear to be gaps in our understanding of how transformational leadership is learned and developed. This study provides perspectives on how transformational leadership is learned and developed in the professional services sector. Namely, it is developed largely through informal means, and in particular, through drawing on prior experiences.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this research was to study CEOs of professional services businesses whose leadership styles have been identified by company executives as transformational. This study was carried out in order to understand if and how the nominated CEOs perceived that they demonstrated transformational leadership in complex and challenging work environments.

Based on the major findings and interpretations of this interpretive case study, I have drawn four conclusions that are detailed below. In this section I also offer recommendations for practice and research.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1: In this study there was evidence that for CEOs of professional services business to be transformational it was critical to engage in idealized influence and individualized consideration

Transformational CEOs in this sample appear to be engaged in idealized influence activities, including role modeling, exhibiting high standards of conduct, behaving in ways to develop respect and trust, and providing a vision and mission, which were highly valuable and supported transformation. Further, they also engaged in individualized consideration activities, which included listening carefully to needs of individuals, acting as a coach or advisor, developing others, creating a supportive climate, and treating

others in caring and unique ways, which were also highly impactful and facilitated transformation.

Conclusion 2: Drawing on past experiences was instrumental in CEOs in this sample becoming transformational leaders

The CEOs in this study learned to be transformational through drawing on past career and life experiences. Crucial to becoming transformational were the insights, perspectives, and approaches they developed from reflecting on past experiences that were largely challenging, complex, and ambiguous.

Conclusion 3: Collaborative teams in this sample were essential to support the transformational work of the CEOs

Collaborative teams in this sample were essential to support transformational CEOs. They helped to execute the vision of the CEO, they shared skills and perspectives, and they established accountability and clear expectations of contribution. On collaborative teams there was a greater sense of trust within the team and members felt empowered. They could mobilize work across divisions to deliver work for clients and conflict was addressed and resolved. A lack of teamwork impeded the work of transformational CEOs because of competitive behavior, territoriality, silos, and resistance to change.

Conclusion 4: Organizational processes were frequently cited in this sample as inhibiting the transformational work of the CEOs

In this sample, participants described the “pain and tension” of human resources and financial processes. They discussed the challenges of processes of working across organizational structures and gaining alignment across units. It was described that there is

often a need to create bespoke business models for clients because existing business processes are incapable of fulfilling goals and expectations. Clients have also shared that there is considerable improvement to be made based on the way processes are organized. There was desire expressed to short-circuit organizational processes.

Recommendations

Recommendations for CEOs and those aspiring to become CEOs of professional services businesses

If they seek to be transformational, CEOs and those aspiring to become CEOs of certain sectors of professional services businesses could engage in idealized influence activities, which entail modeling the way their teams should work, setting high standards, cultivating the respect of team members, creating an environment of trust, and developing loyalty. They could develop personal relationships with clients and convey compelling visions to influence clients. They could lead change processes in their organization based on their vision, expectations, and standards.

The individualized consideration activities that CEOs and aspiring CEOs of professional services businesses could engage in are defining goals with team members, checking-in with team members, creating teams with complementary skills and diverse perspectives, conveying care about the team, helping people feel they have a voice, and coaching and supporting team members. They could interact one-on-one with clients to identify and support their needs. They could listen carefully to clients and nurture and develop their network of clients. They could help their clients feel comfortable and create moments of authentic connection. They could support team members individually about plans, implementation, roles, and responsibilities. They could brainstorm with others

about new processes to help the business. They could support the creation of bespoke solutions and models for the business.

Where possible, CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs could develop teams within and across their organization. They could also work to evolve organizational processes to become more efficient and agile or find acceptable workarounds so that processes do not impede their work.

CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs could be aware that learning through informal means is key for them to become transformational. In particular, they should value and learn from their prior experiences. They could reflect on their prior life experiences and their experiences in working with colleagues, clients, and business challenges and harvest insights from those experiences.

There are multiple ways to learn more from past experiences. CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs could focus on recalling prior experiences and journaling about them to help make implicit knowledge explicit and to develop further knowledge. The recall and journaling practice can help them develop a practice of being more reflective. CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs could practice being critically reflective on experiences and challenging their assumptions while validating the knowledge they have.

The journey does not need to be solo: CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs could seek a coach or mentor to guide them through experiences and to help them gain insights from those experiences. They could consider forming or joining a community that aims to draw insights from experience. Team members could be a useful source of feedback and learning.

To help the CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs make these changes to their work activities and learning habits, they could adopt a goal setting and tracking system. One of the CEOs in my study discussed that he uses the OKR system described in *Measure What Matters* (Doerr, 2018). OKR is short for Objectives and Key Results. Objectives are significant, concrete, and action-oriented goals. Key Results are time-bound and monitor and how you get to the Objectives. Doerr discusses that this system is suited to any environment. CEOs can select several work and learning activities that I have described in this section, develop one or more Objectives for each activity, and then identify one or more Key Results for each Objective. A Key Result could simply be: yes or no, was the activity described in the Objective performed in the last three months. Doerr describes that over time users gain more experience with the OKR system, Key Results may become more precise and more aggressive. OKRs can be modified over time. When closing out an OKR cycle, leaders can reflect on whether they accomplished all of their objectives, what contributed to their success, and how they might improve. In effect, it is a system to help people to learn from experience.

Recommendations for Human Resources, Finance, and Operations leaders that design and implement organization systems

Human Resources, Finance, and Operations leaders in professional services businesses are uniquely equipped to support transformational leadership behaviors and the work of transformational leaders. Organizations should communicate about the transformational leadership activities of idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation (Bass & Avolio, 1997), with

particular attention on the first two activities. Organizations could encourage and reward leaders that adopt these behaviors.

Since team members and organizational processes affect the work of transformational CEOs, organizations could institute measures to strengthen teams and evolve organizational processes. Human Resources, Finance, and Operations leaders could attend conferences, courses, or engage in research on improving teams and organizational processes.

Like my recommendation for CEOs and those aspiring to be CEOs, the Human Resources, Finance, and Operations leaders could also adopt a goal setting and tracking system, like OKRs (Doerr, 2018), to help them to make the desired changes in their activities and habits to support transformational leadership. They could also ask their bosses and team members to hold them accountable to supporting transformational leadership.

Recommendations for executive and higher education professionals

Knowledge, skills, and mindsets for transformational leadership can be developed through internal or external executive education. Furthermore, internal executive education professionals could work with organizational leadership to structure job assignments and career development opportunities that would expose aspiring CEOs to a variety of challenging, complex, and ambiguous situations that they could draw on for their learning and growth.

Both executive and higher education professionals could incorporate activities that emphasize reflection, for example, through action learning or mentoring.

Higher education institutions that teach people who go on to join professional services firms could incorporate coursework in transformational leadership and reflective practices.

Recommendations for further research

To help validate the findings for this study it could be repeated with a larger sample size. The study could be extended with a different design to test hypotheses that might grow out of this study. The firms included in my study did not represent all the types of professional services firms that are operating. Further research could include other types of professional services firms and random sampling of firms.

Future studies could look at leaders and firms across the world. The participants in my study were all based in the US and Europe. There could be cultural factors that were not captured in this study that may lead to different conclusions.

Organizational cultures may have impacts on the application and development of transformational leadership. If the research is extended to a variety of professional services firms in different locations, it could be valuable to investigate the influence of organizational cultures.

Since this study largely utilized self-report methods through interviews and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, future studies could help validate the findings for this study by focusing on observational data collected by researchers or methodologies that are experimental and behavior based.

A longitudinal study could be conducted to see what transformational leadership actions, challenges, and supports are identified over time. This type of study could show

perspectives on career stage or experience levels on transformational leadership actions, challenges, and supports.

Future research could look at how and why team member orientations around transformational leadership differ from the orientations of their managers.

Researchers could examine the magnitude of each of the dimensions within challenges and supports identified in this study to gain better understanding of how transformational work can be completed successfully. Investigating magnitude could help answer the question of whether the supports need to be equal or stronger than the challenges for the work to happen successfully.

Challenges and supports to transformational leadership could be examined in relation to particular business situations that leaders face. This is potentially valuable to research because challenges and supports are unlikely to hold for all leaders in all situations in the exact same ways.

To extend Bass and Avolio's (1997) model of transformational leadership, further research could be done with a larger sample to test if the Team-oriented, Client-oriented, and Operations-oriented behavioral categories hold and might be useful as sub-categories of the model.

Revisiting Assumptions

I had four key assumptions, noted in Chapter I, that I held as I began my research that relate to transformational leaders in the professional services sector. I will present and discuss each of these assumptions in light of the study findings and analysis.

My first assumption was that there are transformational CEOs in the professional services sector. Via a nomination process, my research has largely supported this assumption. After sharing the nomination criteria with executives in the site organization, which included definitions of transformational leadership, I was able to collect 18 nominations, with several of these CEOs nominated multiple times. Furthermore, the CEOs in my study took the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, and each of them had an aggregate transformational leadership score that was higher than the norm. Although, since my sample was small, and data are self-reported, this data is not statistically significant. The descriptions of activities provided by CEOs and team members also substantiate the view that there are transformational CEOs in the professional services sector.

My second assumption was that transformational leadership in the professional services environment today is not the same as it was 10 or more years ago, when many contextual factors were different. My study has provided partial support for this view. While I did not investigate changes over time specifically, I did hear about many challenges in the current business environment. The increasing occurrence of bespoke teams and business models for clients and cross-company collaboration supports the view that expectations and practices of leaders are different than they were 10 or more years ago.

The third assumption I had was that transformational leadership extends beyond one's team and organization and encompasses clients and potentially the clients' organization(s). Through the interviews with CEOs and team members and through the

review of the client satisfaction survey data it can be seen that transformational leadership extends to encompass clients and their organizations.

My fourth and final assumption described in Chapter I was that there are common elements to transformational leadership even though the transformational leaders may understand it differently. This assumption was largely supported by my study. The descriptions of transformational leadership activities could in most cases be categorized into Bass and Avolio's (1997) model of transformational leadership.

Researcher Reflections

I came to select this research topic after realizing that while the pace of change and disruption seems to keep increasing, transformational leaders can help people and organizations thrive. Though transformational leadership is not a new theory, attention to how it is applied, developed, and supported in professional services businesses can be valuable to those businesses and their clients.

My goal in selecting this topic for research was to find out what mindsets, skills, and behaviors could be developed in future leaders so that they can be transformational and successful. Further, I wished to gain insights into the ways that transformational leadership can be developed and supported. I have gained many perspectives and deeper insight in these areas.

Though this dissertation is about to draw to a close, in many ways I feel I am at the beginning. More questions come to mind. I am curious to study more samples and analyze more data. I am motivated to go deeper and continue writing. Completing this dissertation is not the same as crossing the finish line of a marathon, nor is it the end of a

journey. I see it as but a step somewhere still near the beginning, with hopefully many more publications yet to come.

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Appendix A – Original Conceptual Framework

I. Approaches Executives Take

Transformational Leadership

- I support, encourage, or coach my team members
- I motivate others to transcend their self-interest
- I communicate an appealing or important vision
- I empower team members by delegating authority to them
- I empower team members by developing their skills or competence
- I reduce controls or simplify processes
- I leverage my influence or charisma to bring people along, to arouse their emotions, or build their sense of identification with me
- I stimulate others to be creative, innovative, or to challenge their own beliefs
- I innovate, experiment, take risks, step into the unknown, or use novel strategies
- I test ideas or come up with alternatives

Transactional Leadership

- I offer rewards for performance
- I watch closely for mistakes and take corrective action
- I correct actions in response to deviation from acceptable standards
- I ensure team has what it needs to complete the work for the client
- I obtain agreements from others
- I come up with a project plan
- I focus on the needs of the client or deliver on their brief
- I follow a system or process that includes information gathering, verification, and briefing my team
- I enforce rules
- I create order out of uncertainty

II. How They Learn to be Transformational Leaders

- I took on greater responsibility at work
- I had to deal with a crisis or turnaround situation in the business
- I learned from a prior leader that I worked for
- I learned from peers or other leaders in the business
- I learned from a mentor or coach
- I had to deal with a difficult employee or team
- I learned from the organizational culture
- I learned from early personal hardship

- I learned from an educational program
- I learned through spiritual practices
- I learned from being in high pressure situations
- I learned from trial and error

III. Factors Perceived as Helpful to Being a Transformational Leader

- I am measured on helping my client's business grow or helping solve their problems instead of my bottom line
- I focus on helping the client look good instead of focusing on my bottom line
- I have received mentorship, training, or developmental opportunities
- I have the trust of the client and/or my team
- I have freedom to try new approaches
- I have the courage to have difficult conversations with clients or team members
- I have the courage to work on bold ideas
- I have a bold vision or strategy
- I have what it takes to implement transformation
- The client has set the expectation for transformation

IV. Factors Perceived as Impeding Transformational Leadership

- There are many financial or administrative pressures and requirements (e.g., rate card and timesheet system)
- My clients are very tactical, they deny the need for change
- There are extensive, burdensome internal negotiations
- The contract process, restrictive contracts
- The people I work with have a siloed mentality
- My clients or team members lack faith in me
- There is a lack of mentorship, training, or developmental opportunities
- There are risks or penalties associated with failure
- There is a denial about the need for transformation
- I have a fear of failure, of losing my job, or of losing my client
- There is a lack of reward or upside for taking risks
- There is a lack of encouragement

Appendix B – Site Location Form

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

The research study described in the Proposal Submission Form has been reviewed by the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (TCIRB). This researcher is now seeking participants willing to cooperate in the study. Please sign below if you agree to have your organization participate in this study.

Researcher/Principal Investigator: Roshan Bharwaney

Title of Study:

A Case Study Exploring Application and Development of Transformational Leadership in Ten Executives That Lead Large Client Service Teams

Research Will Involve:

This research entails studying leaders that have been nominated by company executives as transformational to understand the ways in which they demonstrate that capacity in complex and challenging work environments in order to better understand transformational leadership in professional services firms. The data collection methods consist of interviews with leaders, a leadership questionnaire taken by leaders, interviews with their team members (maximum of two for each leader), and document analysis. The data collection is estimated to take place between May and August 2019. I will collect data on company premises. I will take precautions not to disrupt work operations. I will use quiet, private meeting rooms for the interviews.

Cooperating Organization:

Start Date of Data Collection:

Name: _____

Role: _____

Organization: _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

Appendix C – Briefing to C-level Executives (Nominators)

Dear [name of executive],

I hope you are doing well. For my dissertation research for my doctoral degree in Adult Learning and Leadership, I am conducting a study on transformational leaders in our organization. I plan to examine the application and development of transformational leadership in client service leaders in order to better support and develop current and future leaders. To date, there is little research on transformational leadership in our industry and little research on how transformational leadership is developed.

I am seeking your help in identifying leaders that you view as transformational to participate in an interview with me and complete a questionnaire. Your name or the names of the leaders you nominate will not be used in the report of the findings. I will not disclose to anyone who you are nominating and request that you keep your nominations confidential too. I won't tell the nominees who they were nominated by.

If you prefer not to nominate leaders, that is completely fine. You and the leaders nominated are free to decline to participate at any time with no consequence.

To help you with your nominations, below are criteria for inclusion and information about transformational leadership. Please can you send me the names of 10-15 leaders and the agencies/teams that they work on? I will review the pool of nominations and select 10 to invite to participate in the study. For the purposes of confidentiality and to comply with the Internal Review Board of Teachers College Columbia University, I cannot let you know who the final 10 leaders are that agree to participate in the study. I will share a summary of the findings and recommendations with you upon completion of the study.

Criteria for Inclusion

1. Senior business leaders (over 15 years of work experience) that work within our organization.
2. Have been working within our organization for at least five years.
3. Primarily client-facing, i.e., they spend most of their working hours on engagements with and for clients.
4. Lead a large team, with over 50 employees reporting into them.
5. Lead an international business, working with clients or team members in more than one country.
6. Have been identified as a transformational leader by multiple executives.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership goes beyond exchange of rewards for achieved goals and places an emphasis on the needs and values of people, thereby fostering transformation in people and organizations. According to Bass and Avolio, transformational leadership behaviors are: 1) **idealized influence**, which arouses follower emotions and identification with the leader, 2) **intellectual stimulation**, which increases follower awareness of problems and viewing them from new perspectives, 3) **individualized consideration**, which consists of support, coaching, and mentoring, and 4) **inspirational motivation**, which entails communicating expectations and using symbols and emotional appeals to focus efforts.

In determining your nominations, please consider how the leader is transformational both with their team members and clients.

Thank you in advance for your support,

Roshan Bharwaney

Appendix D – Email Correspondence

Email correspondence scripts to participants

Email to leaders

Dear [name of potential participant],

I hope this note finds you doing well.

You have been identified as a transformational leader by senior executives and have been recommended to participate in a study exploring how you lead, how you learned to lead, and the supports and challenges around your leadership. This will entail participating in an interview and completing a questionnaire. The interview and questionnaire are a central part of a study on transformational leadership in professional services businesses that I am conducting as part of my doctoral dissertation. This research study will support the requirements of a Doctor of Education degree in Adult Learning and Leadership from Teachers College, Columbia University.

The research findings can help develop deeper understanding of transformational leadership in our industry and suggest ways to develop and support future leaders.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you can decline to participate at any time with no consequence.

As part of the study, I also wish to interview two of your direct-reports to learn their perspectives on the work of your team and the factors that support and challenge your work.

If you wish to participate, please:

- 1) Review and complete the enclosed informed consent form.
- 2) Please provide the names and email addresses of two direct reports that I can interview for up to 30 minutes each and please introduce me to them by email.

I will then be back in touch with you to schedule a one-hour interview. This interview will take place at a location convenient to you or via Zoom (videoconferencing application).

With your approval, the interview will be audio-taped to allow for a more accurate analysis of findings. As part of my commitment to confidentiality, your name, the names of your company or clients, and any other names you mention will be omitted from the report. None of the data from individual interviews will be shared in a way that can lead to the identification of any participants. Themes from the interviews will be reported and any direct quotes used will have all identifiers removed.

Should you have any questions, please email me or call me at +1.646.256.7631.

Thank you in advance,

Roshan Bharwaney
Doctoral Student
Teachers College, Columbia University

Email to team members

Dear [name of potential participant],

I hope this note finds you doing well.

Your manager has been identified as a transformational leader by senior executives and has agreed to participate in a research study on their leadership. This study is on transformational leadership in professional services businesses, which I am conducting as part of my doctoral dissertation. This study will support the requirements of a Doctor of Education degree in Adult Learning and Leadership from Teachers College, Columbia University. The research findings can help develop deeper understanding of transformational leadership in our industry and suggest ways to develop and support future leaders.

Your manager has asked that you participate in an interview of up to 30 minutes. In this interview we will discuss your views and experiences on the work of your team and the factors that support and challenge your work.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you can decline to participate at any time with no consequence.

If you wish to participate, please review and complete the enclosed informed consent form. I will then be back in touch with you to schedule the interview. This interview will take place at a location convenient to you or via Zoom (videoconferencing application).

With your approval, the interview will be audio-taped to allow for a more accurate analysis of findings. As part of my commitment to confidentiality, your name, the names of your company or clients, and any other names you mention will be omitted from the report. None of the data from individual interviews will be shared in a way that can lead to the identification of any participants. Themes from the interviews will be reported and any direct quotes used will have all identifiers removed.

Should you have any questions, please email me or call me at +1.646.256.7631.

Thank you in advance,

Roshan Bharwaney
Doctoral Student
Teachers College, Columbia University

Appendix E – Informed Consent for CEOs

Protocol Title: A Case Study Exploring Application and Development of Transformational Leadership in Ten Executives That Lead Large Client Service Teams

Principal Researcher: Roshan Bharwaney, 646 256 7631,
roshan.bharwaney@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION You are invited to participate in this research study called “A Case Study Exploring Application and Development of Transformational Leadership in Ten Executives That Lead Large Client Service Teams.” You may qualify to take part in this research study because you meet the following criteria:

1. Senior business leaders (over 15 years of work experience) that work within the organization.
2. Have been working within the same organization for at least five years.
3. Primarily client-facing, i.e., they spend most of their working hours on engagements with and for clients.
4. Lead a large team, with over 50 employees reporting into them.
5. Lead an international business, working with clients or team members in more than one country.
6. Have been identified as a transformational leader by multiple C-level executives at the headquarters of the conglomerate.

Approximately thirty people will participate in this study and it will take about 75 minutes total of your time over the next few weeks.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE? This study is being done to examine the application and development of transformational leadership in client service leaders in professional services businesses in order to better support and develop current and future leaders.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? If you decide to participate, the primary researcher will ask you to complete a questionnaire and individually interview you. You will also be asked to nominate two team members that report to you to be approached by the researcher to participate in an interview.

You will be asked to complete an online survey about your leadership style. This will take about 15 minutes.

You will be invited to participate in an interview at your office or a private meeting room at your workplace, or if it is not convenient to meet in person, then over Zoom (an online

video call platform). During the individual interview you will be asked to discuss how you lead your team, how you have learned to lead, and the supports and challenges you perceive around leading transformation. This interview will be audio-recorded. The researcher will tell you when they plan to start and stop the recording. After the audio recording is written down (transcribed) the audio recording will be deleted. If you do not wish to be audio-recorded, you will still be able to participate. The researcher will just take hand-notes. The interview will take approximately sixty minutes. You will be given a pseudonym or false name in order to keep your identity confidential.

WHAT POSSIBLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

This is a minimal risk study, which means the harms or discomforts that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life. There are some risks to consider. You might feel some discomfort in recalling and discussing some past experiences or current challenges in the workplace. You do not have to answer any questions or share anything you do not want to talk about. You can stop participating in the study at any time without penalty. You might feel concerned that things you say might get back to your supervisor. Your information will be kept confidential. You will not be required to reveal confidential or proprietary information. There is a slight risk of confidentiality breach if it becomes known that you are participating in this study. There is unlikely any negative association with being known to be participating in this study because it is looking at exemplary leaders and the team members that work for them. Further, all data will be de-identified and findings will be reported in aggregate.

The primary researcher is taking precautions to keep your information confidential and prevent anyone from discovering or guessing your identity, such as using a pseudonym instead of your name and keeping all information on a password protected computer and locked in a file drawer.

WHAT POSSIBLE BENEFITS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY?

You will not be paid to participate.

WHEN IS THE STUDY OVER? CAN I LEAVE THE STUDY BEFORE IT ENDS?

The study is over when you have completed the questionnaire and individual interview. However, you can leave the study at any time even if you have not finished.

PROTECTION OF YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY The primary researcher will keep all written materials locked in a desk drawer in a locked office. Any electronic or digital information (including audio recordings) will be stored on a computer that is password protected. What is on the audio recording will be written down and the audio recording will then be destroyed. There will be no record matching your real name with your pseudonym.

For quality assurance, the study team, the study sponsor (grant agency), and/or members of the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB) may review the data collected from you as part of this study. Otherwise, all information obtained from your participation in this study will be held strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by U.S. or State law.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED? The results of this study may be published in journals and presented at academic conferences. Your identity will be removed from any data you provide before publication or use for educational purposes. Your name or any identifying information about you will not be published. This study is being conducted as part of the dissertation of the primary researcher.

CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDING Audio recording is part of this research study. You can choose whether to give permission to be recorded. If you decide that you don't wish to be recorded, **you will still be able to participate** in this research study.

_____ I give my consent to be recorded

Signature

_____ I **do not** consent to be recorded

Signature

WHO MAY VIEW MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

___ I consent to allow audio-recorded materials viewed at an educational setting or at a conference outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

Signature

___ I **do not** consent to allow audio-recorded materials viewed outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

Signature

WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

If you have any questions about taking part in this research study, you should contact the primary researcher, Roshan Bharwaney, at 646 256 7631 or at roshan.bharwaney@gmail.com.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (the human research ethics committee) at 212-678-4105 or email IRB@tc.edu or you can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027, Box 151. The IRB is the committee that oversees human research protection for Teachers College, Columbia University.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

- I have read the Informed Consent Form and have been offered the opportunity to discuss the form with the researcher.
- I have had ample opportunity to ask questions about the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits regarding this research study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw participation at any time without penalty.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at their professional discretion. This will only be if the interview goes and remains off topic.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue my participation, the researcher will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research study that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- Your data will not be used in further research studies.
- I should receive a copy of the Informed Consent Form document.

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study:

Print name: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature:

Appendix F – Informed Consent for Team Members

Protocol Title: A Case Study Exploring Application and Development of Transformational Leadership in Ten Executives That Lead Large Client Service Teams
Principal Researcher: Roshan Bharwaney, 646 256 7631,
roshan.bharwaney@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION You are invited to participate in this research study called “A Case Study Exploring Application and Development of Transformational Leadership in Ten Executives That Lead Large Client Service Teams.” You may qualify to take part in this research study because your manager meet the following criteria:

7. Senior business leaders (over 15 years of work experience) that work within the organization.
8. Have been working within the same organization for at least five years.
9. Primarily client-facing, i.e., they spend most of their working hours on engagements with and for clients.
10. Lead a large team, with over 50 employees reporting into them.
11. Lead an international business, working with clients or team members in more than one country.
12. Have been identified as a transformational leader by multiple C-level executives at the headquarters of the conglomerate.

Approximately thirty people will participate in this study and it will take about 30 minutes total of your time over the next few weeks.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE? This study is being done to examine the application and development of transformational leadership in client service leaders in professional services businesses in order to better support and develop current and future leaders.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY? If you decide to participate, the primary researcher will ask to individually interview you.

You will be invited to participate in an interview at your office or a private meeting room at your workplace, or if it is not convenient to meet in person, then over Zoom (an online video call platform). During the individual interview you will be asked to discuss approaches that your manager takes in leading your team and the supports and challenges you perceive around them leading transformation. This interview will be audio-recorded. The researcher will tell you when they plan to start and stop the recording. After the

audio recording is written down (transcribed) the audio recording will be deleted. If you do not wish to be audio-recorded, you will still be able to participate. The researcher will just take hand-notes. The interview will take approximately thirty minutes. You will be given a pseudonym or false name in order to keep your identity confidential.

WHAT POSSIBLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

This is a minimal risk study, which means the harms or discomforts that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life. There are some risks to consider. You might feel some discomfort in recalling and discussing some past experiences or current challenges in the workplace. You do not have to answer any questions or share anything you do not want to talk about. You can stop participating in the study at any time without penalty. You might feel concerned that things you say might get back to your supervisor. Your information will be kept confidential. You will not be required to reveal confidential or proprietary information. There is a slight risk of confidentiality breach if it becomes known that you are participating in this study. There is unlikely any negative association with being known to be participating in this study because it is looking at exemplary leaders and the team members that work for them. Further, all data will be de-identified and findings will be reported in aggregate.

The primary researcher is taking precautions to keep your information confidential and prevent anyone from discovering or guessing your identity, such as using a pseudonym instead of your name and keeping all information on a password protected computer and locked in a file drawer.

WHAT POSSIBLE BENEFITS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY?

You will not be paid to participate.

WHEN IS THE STUDY OVER? CAN I LEAVE THE STUDY BEFORE IT ENDS?

The study is over when you have completed the questionnaire and individual interview. However, you can leave the study at any time even if you have not finished.

PROTECTION OF YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY The primary researcher will keep all written materials locked in a desk drawer in a locked office. Any electronic or digital information (including audio recordings) will be stored on a computer that is password protected. What is on the audio recording will be written down and the audio recording will then be destroyed. There will be no record matching your real name with your pseudonym.

For quality assurance, the study team, the study sponsor (grant agency), and/or members of the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB) may review the data collected from you as part of this study. Otherwise, all information obtained from your

participation in this study will be held strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by U.S. or State law.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED? The results of this study may be published in journals and presented at academic conferences. Your identity will be removed from any data you provide before publication or use for educational purposes. Your name or any identifying information about you will not be published. This study is being conducted as part of the dissertation of the primary researcher.

CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDING Audio recording is part of this research study. You can choose whether to give permission to be recorded. If you decide that you don't wish to be recorded, **you will still be able to participate** in this research study.

_____ I give my consent to be recorded

Signature

_____ I **do not** consent to be recorded

Signature

WHO MAY VIEW MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

___ I consent to allow audio-recorded materials viewed at an educational setting or at a conference outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

Signature

___ I **do not** consent to allow audio-recorded materials viewed outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

Signature

WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

If you have any questions about taking part in this research study, you should contact the primary researcher, Roshan Bharwaney, at 646 256 7631 or at roshan.bharwaney@gmail.com.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (the human research ethics committee) at 212-678-4105 or email IRB@tc.edu or you can write to the IRB at Teachers College,

Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027, Box 151. The IRB is the committee that oversees human research protection for Teachers College, Columbia University.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

- I have read the Informed Consent Form and have been offered the opportunity to discuss the form with the researcher.
- I have had ample opportunity to ask questions about the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits regarding this research study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw participation at any time without penalty.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at their professional discretion. This will only be if the interview goes and remains off topic.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue my participation, the researcher will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research study that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- Your data will not be used in further research studies.
- I should receive a copy of the Informed Consent Form document.

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study:

Print name: _____ **Date:** _____

Signature:

Appendix G – Interview Protocols

Interview Questions for Leaders

Research Question I: What actions do leaders who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?

1. Please describe an example of your approach to working with your clients and team.
2. Please give me an example of a method or strategy you use in working with your clients or team.
3. Please tell me about a principle that you follow in working with your clients or team and please describe an example of its application.

Research Question II: How do these leaders describe how they learned to be transformational?

1. How have you learned to lead in ways that result in transformation among people and the business?
2. What aspects of your background helped you learn to lead transformation?
3. How did you develop the skills or competencies to be a transformational leader?

Research Question III: What factors do these leaders perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

1. What factors have helped you in leading transformation?
2. What workplace dynamics or people are supportive of transformational initiatives that you lead?
3. If you were to advise others on leading transformation in your environment, what two lessons would you include?
4. What obstacles do you face, or have previously faced, in leading transformation?
5. What has been most challenging to you in leading transformation?
6. What or who is/was unsupportive of transformation in your environment?

Interview Questions for Direct Reports

Research Question I: What actions do leaders who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?

1. Please describe an example of your manager's approach to working with your clients and the team.

2. Please give an example of a method or strategy that your manager uses in working with your clients or the team.
3. Please tell me about a leadership or management principle that your manager talks about and please describe an example of how they apply it.

Research Question III: What factors do these leaders perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

1. What factors have helped your manager in leading transformation?
2. What workplace dynamics or people are supportive of transformational initiatives that your manager has led?
3. If your manager were to advise others on leading change in your environment, what two lessons do you think they would include?
4. What obstacles does your manager face, or has previously faced, in leading transformation?
5. What has been most challenging to your manager in leading transformation?
6. What or who is/was unsupportive of transformation in your environment?

Appendix H – Coding Scheme

Research Question 1: Approaches Leaders Take (definitions from Northouse, 2019)

Transformational Leadership

- II: Idealized influence (builds trust and acts with integrity)
 - Act as strong role model and embody the qualities they want in the team. Followers want to emulate them. High standards of moral and ethical conduct. Respected by followers. Provide vision and mission that others want to follow. Has an emotional component.
- IC: Individualized consideration (coaches and develops people)
 - Provides supportive climate. Listens carefully to individual needs. Act as coach and adviser while trying to assist followers in becoming fully actualized. Treats others in caring and unique ways.
- IM: Inspirational motivation (encourages others)
 - Communicate high expectations, inspire through motivation to become committed to the shared vision. Use symbols and emotional appeals to achieve more than people would in their own self-interest.
- IS: Intellectual stimulation (encourages innovative thinking)
 - Stimulates others to be creative and innovative and to challenge their own beliefs and values. Supports followers as they try new approaches. Encourages thinking and problem solving. Increases awareness of problems.

Research Question 2: How They Describe How They Learned to be Transformational

Informal Learning

- Learning from experience
- Dialogue with others
- Observation
- Reading/research
- Trial and error

Formal Learning

- Conferences or training programs

Research Question 3: Factors Perceived as Facilitating or Impeding Their Transformational Work

Facilitating

- Team members
- Other leaders
- Capabilities of the organization
- Clients

Impeding

- Lack of teamwork

- Process
- Dealing with change
- Mismatch of values
- Challenging role

Appendix I – Demographic Questions

At the end of each interview I asked the participants for their:

1. Age
2. Race/ethnicity (they can specify more than one)
3. Gender
4. City/town and country of residence
5. Where they were born
6. Which other (if any) cities, towns, or countries they have lived in their lives
7. The highest level of education they have completed (i.e., high school, associate degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, professional degree, or doctoral degree)
8. How many years they have worked in the industry
9. The number of people that are in the team they lead
10. The number of direct reports

Appendix J – Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

This appendix section provides a summary of the information in the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire manual and sample set (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This instrument “has been used in field and laboratory research to study transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant leadership styles” (Avolio & Bass, p.7, 2004). The current version of the questionnaire has 45-items and is called the MLQ 5X short. Various MLQ versions have been used in over 30 countries and in multiple languages. It has been used across organizations including businesses, hospitals, religious organizations, military, government, and educational institutions.

The questions in the instrument cover behaviors and attributes within nine components of transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidant leadership. The nine components are: builds trust (idealized influence attributed), acts with integrity (idealized influence behavior), encourages others (inspirational motivation), encourages innovative thinking (intellectual stimulation), coaches and develops people (individualized consideration), rewards achievement (contingent reward), monitors deviations and mistakes (management by exception – active), fights fires (management by exception – passive), avoids involvement (*laissez-faire*).

There is a self-rating version of the MLQ and version given to raters of leaders. In my study, I only made use of the self-rating form, since the findings were not going to be used as a core part of my analysis, but instead to provide some affirmation of whether or not the leaders nominated to my study were transformational.

The items are scored on a five-point scale, with 0 representing “not at all” and 4 representing “frequently, if not always.” The instrument typically takes 15 minutes to complete and it is anticipated that MLQ respondents have the reading ability of the US ninth grade level. My respondents completed the web-based instrument, available at mindgarden.com.

To validate and cross-validate MLQ 5X, 14 samples were studied by 14 different investigators, with a total of 3,786 respondents. The manual cites and describes research showing equivalence of factors across gender. The data described in the manual supports the nine components of transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership through consistency across raters, regions, and cultures.

Appendix K – Distribution Chart – Finding 1

What actions do leaders who are seen as transformational take in working with clients and teams?

	Idealized Influence	Individualized Consideration	Inspirational Motivation	Intellectual Stimulation	Total
CEO 1	X	X	X	X	4
Team Member 1A	X		X	X	3
Team Member 1B	X	X	X	X	4
CEO 2	X	X	X		3
Team Member 2A	X		X	X	3
Team Member 2B	X	X	X	X	4
CEO 3	X	X	X	X	4
Team Member 3A		X	X		2
Team Member 3B	X	X	X	X	4
CEO 4		X	X	X	3
Team Member 4A	X		X	X	3
Team Member 4B	X	X			2
CEO 5	X		X	X	3
Team Member 5A	X	X	X		3
Team Member 5B	X	X	X		3
CEO 6	X	X		X	3
Team Member 6A	X	X	X	X	4
Team Member 6B		X		X	2
CEO 7	X	X			2
Team Member 7A	X	X		X	3
Team Member 7B	X		X		2
CEO 8		X	X	X	3
Team Member 8A		X	X		2
Team Member 8B	X	X	X	X	4
CEO 9	X	X	X	X	4
Team Member 9A	X	X	X	X	4
Team Member 9B	X	X		X	3
CEO 10	X	X	X		3
Total	23/28	23/28	22/28	19/28	
%	82%	82%	79%	68%	

Major finding: A strong majority (82%) of CEOs and their team members reported that the most predominant transformational leadership activities in which the CEOs engaged were idealized influence and individualized consideration.

Appendix L – Descriptions consistent with Bass and Avolio’s transformational leadership components per CEO based on interviews with them and their team members

The descriptions in the chart below summarize the data presented for Finding 1 in the Findings chapter. The information in the chart does not encompass all the consistent descriptions across all the interviews conducted.

Code:

II: Idealized Influence

IC: Individualized Consideration

IM: Inspirational Motivation

IS: Intellectual Stimulation

Participant	Indicators
CEO 1	<p>IC: Discussed building close and caring relationships with very senior clients and potential clients that enable them to feel comfortable confiding in him what they find inspiring, exciting, and bothersome.</p> <p>IM: Brings a clarity of vision and paints compelling pictures of the future, which helps others understand what they need to do. Conveys vision, which makes people want to go with him. He also is full of conviction, uses rhetoric, shares anecdotes, and builds credibility.</p> <p>IS: Has “sparing” matches aimed at reaching better ideas and outcomes, which provides a sense of freedom. Has a point of view that senior clients are lonely at the top and are short of people that tell them things straight. He has interesting and important things to say to them or has questions that get them to think. Strong clients who engage with CEO 1 are typically able to “face the brutal facts” that will help them to come out stronger in their business, while some of their clients are aiming to buy confidence by working with CEO 1. The confident clients are able to challenge the way they interact with their audiences with the help of CEO 1.</p>
CEO 2	<p>II: Involved in every aspect during a period of business transformation because of his desire to ensure that his vision would be realized, to demonstrate accountability to others, and to build trust in their eyes.</p> <p>IC: Described having empathy and understanding your audience. Cares about people as individuals.</p> <p>IM: Discussed that it is helpful “having some charisma, personality and stature, so you can persuade people, so they listen to you.” Can take people on a journey that they feel they have created and that helps them to feel they are privy to the end answer and the way of getting there.</p> <p>IS: Seeks diverse perspectives to challenge the team with a view to keep the team from becoming “too comfortable.”</p>
CEO 4	<p>II: Seen as “absolutely iconic” by clients, even after just one meeting with them. Having this kind of impression on people can transform perceptions.</p> <p>IM: When sharing interesting pieces of previous work with clients (“gossiping success” and “merchandising good work widely”), those clients would express that they want to do similar work. She shared that gossiping success is a way to drive transformation because it gets people on board and makes people feel like they can do similar work. She has the ability to help people in the organization not feel overwhelmed and to help them think that what might seem impossible was very possible. She demands that her teams are highly functioning and helps people feel greater than the sum of parts, empowered and excited to deliver, loyal to the company, energized, and feel that there was intangible spirit in the</p>

	<p>team.</p> <p>IS: Discussed her practice of surprising the client through bringing them information or an example that they don't expect. She explained that this helps the client to understand the work of the agency better and opens up different types of conversation.</p>
CEO 5	<p>II: Being hands-on with the work and being transparent are ways that he builds trust and creates a nurturing environment that helps people feel safe to share their feelings.</p> <p>IC: Attentive to creating moments of personal connection with clients, particularly during breaks between meetings, and encourages that his team plan for those moments too. Gave almost the same amount of emphasis to an intern as he gave to a reporter from the Financial Times about a big story.</p> <p>IM: Discussed that he brings together the positive things happening in his organization into a narrative so that people can see the impact, because some people don't see it fully. Through telling people about the summation of all the good in the organization, he wants people to keep building on it. His preference to speak face-to-face with people helps them feel important, accountable, obligated, good about their involvement, and responsible.</p>
CEO 6	<p>IC: Took on a relationship with a client that was feared by her own team and was able to develop a mentoring relationship with that client, giving her feedback that "shocked" her. Is committed to developing leaders around her. She wanted a team member to present at a board meeting in order for the board to know who he is and to help him build his career. Described as a hands-on mentor and coach to many people in the business.</p> <p>IM: A team member describes that she was so taken with CEO 6's spirit, confidence, and vulnerability.</p> <p>IS: Challenges ideas so that they end up stronger and sharper. Pushes people outside their comfort zones.</p>
CEO 7	<p>II: A personal, authentic connection is her key to the trust-building process with clients and comes ahead of the selling process. Is not conflict avoidant, does not let problems persist, and does not feel the need to placate people.</p>
CEO 8	<p>IC: Discussed that there are times when her colleagues are not seeing eye to eye, so she meets with them, is oriented to their needs, and wants them to understand that she will support them, which engages them to do more. Described by her team member as having a coaching style. She was more focused on the local team than on herself and she was an enabler of the team. Her other team member discussed how she can understand their clients deeply, including their motivations, business needs, and head space. She spends a lot of time with clients, which shows dedication.</p> <p>IM: Focused on the health and energy of the team with a view to motivate them and help them feel better. This focus on health was part of a deliberate approach she was taking in her own life. A team member described that this approach was inspiring and that the team was in better condition because of it. Another team member shared about how CEO 8 motivated him to be fearless, to step outside his comfort zone, and to push forward.</p>
CEO 9	<p>II: Demonstrates in a friendly way that it is ok to not know everything. This encourages others to chill out and ask questions about things that they don't know.</p> <p>IC: He likes to connect with others to understand their inner voice, desires, fears, frustrations, and biases. Aims to establish one on one relationships with clients, do activities together, get to know clients very well, and make them feel comfortable.</p> <p>IS: Makes it acceptable for colleagues to try new things and not always be right. Arranged for a meeting with clients and people in the company that, while seeming like a party, provided insights.</p>
CEO 10	<p>II: Discussed gaining trust through consistent behavior, being authentic, and having moral integrity. He also discussed giving advice to another leader around being authentic.</p>

Appendix M – Distribution Chart – Finding 2

How do these leaders describe how they learned to be transformational?

	Informal					Formal
	Learning from experience	Dialogue with others	Observation	Reading/ Research	Trial and error	Conferences or training programs
CEO 1	X	X		X	X	
CEO 2	X	X	X		X	X
CEO 3	X	X				
CEO 4	X	X	X	X	X	X
CEO 5	X		X			
CEO 6	X	X	X	X		
CEO 7	X	X	X	X		
CEO 8	X	X	X	X	X	X
CEO 9	X	X	X	X		
CEO 10	X	X	X			
Total	10/10	9/10	8/10	5/10	4/10	3/10
%	100%	90%	80%	50%	40%	30%

Major finding: All CEOs (100%) learned to be transformational largely through informal means by drawing on past experiences.

Appendix N – Distribution Chart – Finding 3 & 4

What factors do these leaders perceive facilitate and/or impede their transformational work?

	Facilitating				Impeding				
	Team members	Other leaders	Capabilities of the org.	Clients	Lack of teamwork	Process	Dealing with change	Mismatch of values	Challenging role
CEO1	X	X			X			X	
TM1A						X			
TM1B	X	X							
CEO2	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
TM2A	X				X		X	X	
TM2B	X		X			X		X	
CEO3		X	X		X			X	
TM3A	X		X	X	X	X		X	
TM3B		X	X			X		X	
CEO4		X	X			X			X
TM4A	X				X				X
TM4B		X	X		X	X	X		
CEO5	X		X			X			
TM5A			X		X		X		
TM5B		X	X				X		
CEO6		X	X		X	X		X	X
TM6A	X								X
TM6B	X		X			X	X		
CEO7	X	X				X	X		
TM7A		X	X				X		
TM7B	X	X		X	X				X
CEO8	X				X		X	X	
TM8A	X	X		X	X	X			
TM8B		X			X	X	X		
CEO9	X						X		
TM9A	X								X
TM9B	X	X			X		X		X
CEO10	X				X	X			X
Total	18/28	15/28	13/28	3/28	14/28	14/28	12/28	9/28	9/28
%	64%	54%	46%	11%	50%	50%	43%	32%	32%

Major findings: A majority of participants (64%) indicated that team members facilitated transformational work, while, a lesser number of participants, 50%, described both lack of teamwork and organizational process as impeding their transformational work.

Appendix O – Participant Demographics

Participant	Job title	Sex	Age	Ethnicity	Highest education	Years in industry	Direct reports	Org. size
CEO 1	CEO	M	53	White	Bachelors	31	3	150
Team Member 1A	Chief Solutions Officer	M	56	White	Doctorate	28	2	150
Team Member 1B	Partner	M	43	White	Bachelors	19	4	200
CEO 2	Regional CEO	M	47	White	Bachelors	26	6	1,100
Team Member 2A	Regional Chief Customer Officer	F	40	White	Bachelors	20	8	600
Member 2B	Regional Chief Operating Officer	M	47	White	Bachelors	24	16	80
CEO 3	Regional CEO	M	48	White	High School	18	12	5,500
Team Member 3A	Regional Chief Strategy Officer	M	33	White	Bachelors	12	6	200
Team Member 3B	Global Chief HR Officer	M	43	Asian-White	Masters	2	3	70
CEO 4	Global CEO	F	53	White	Bachelors	29	23	2,500
Team Member 4A	President	M	44	White	Bachelors	24	11	40
Team Member 4B	Global Managing Director	M	37	Asian	Masters	16	2	5
CEO 5	Global CEO	M	49	White	Bachelors	26	20	7,200
Team Member 5A	Executive Director	F	39	Asian-White	Bachelors	17	3*	15
Team Member 5B	Chief of Staff	M	59	White	Bachelors	20	3	12
CEO 6	Global CEO	F	59	White	Bachelors	<25	10	4,000
Team Member 6A	Chief Culture Officer	F	40	White	Bachelors	20	0	4,000
Team Member 6B	President	M	49	African American	Masters	27	28	1,100
CEO 7	Global CEO	F	48	White	Bachelors	23	25	20,000
Team Member 7A	Global CFO	F	48	White	Bachelors	14	7	“Thousands”
Team Member 7B	Global Chief HR Officer	F	46	White	Bachelors	12	6	120
CEO 8	Global CEO	F	58	White	High School	34	80	400
Team Member 8A	Chief Client Officer	M	48	White	Bachelors	18	8	500
Team Member 8B	Global Client Leader	M	54	White	Bachelors	28	8	120
CEO 9	Regional CEO	M	46	White	Bachelors	25	20	4,000
Team Member 9A	Regional Chief Client Officer	M	47	White	Bachelors	<20	40	4,000
Team Member 9B	Regional Chief Strategy Officer	M	50	White	Bachelors	22	12	75
CEO 10	Global CEO	M	66	White	Bachelors	45	100	25,000

* = My estimate based on the interview